







# Hassel Smith

Paintings of the 1950's

16 April- 23 May 1987

Opening Reception:  
Thursday 16 April 6 to 8 p.m.

**BlumHelman**

916 Colorado Avenue Santa Monica

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# HASSELL SMITH

PAINTINGS 1961 — 1963

*My paintings are intended to be  
additions rather than reflections  
on or upon life.*

HS

SANTA BARBARA MUSEUM OF ART

MAY 7 TO JUNE 9, 1968



ONE-MAN

MAR 1 1968

SMITH, H

THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
AND THE DIRECTOR  
OF THE PASADENA ART MUSEUM  
CORDIALLY INVITE YOU  
TO AN OPENING RECEPTION  
FOR THE EXHIBITION OF  
HASSEL SMITH  
TUESDAY EVENING, MARCH 14  
AT EIGHT O'CLOCK

REFRESHMENTS

LIBRARY  
LOS ANGELES COUNTY MUSEUM OF ART  
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA





# HASSEL SMITH

*Selected Works 1945-1981*

THE OAKLAND MUSEUM  
ART SPECIAL GALLERY  
MARCH 3-APRIL 26, 1981

Reception for the artist  
Sunday, March 8, 5-7 pm



# HASSEL SMITH

## *Recent Paintings*

17 May - 16 June 1984

*Reception for the artist*

*Thursday 17 May 5:30 - 7:30*

LIBRARY

MAY 25 1984

LOS ANGELES COUNTY  
MUSEUM OF ART

**Gallery Paule Anglim**

14 Geary Street San Francisco Calif. 94108

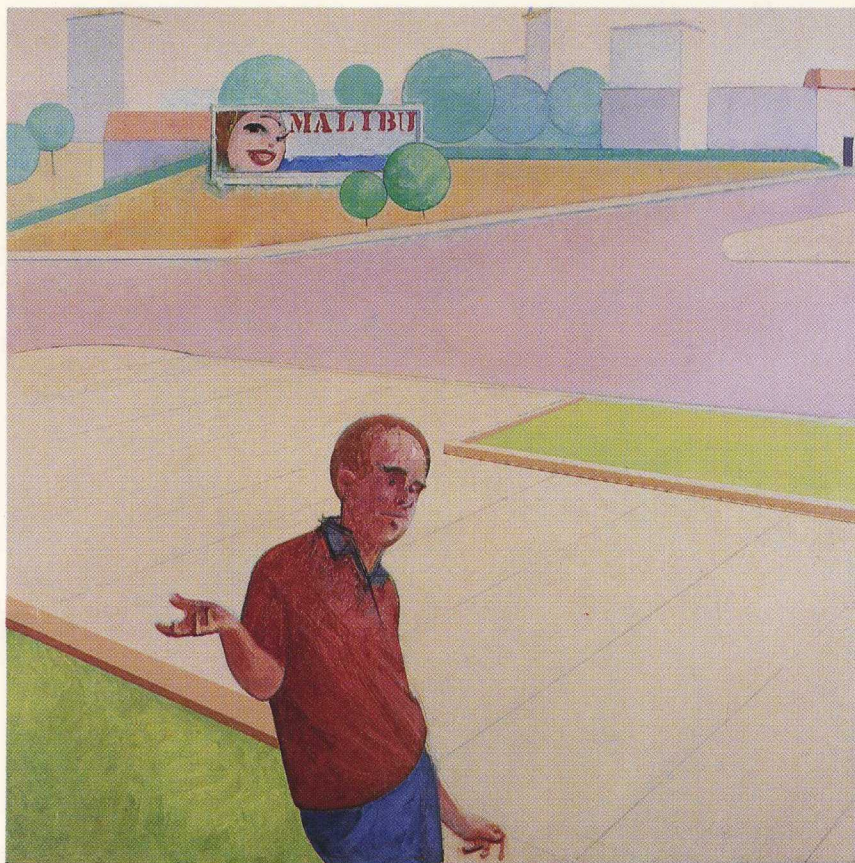
[415] 433-2710 Tues.-Fri. 11:00-5:30 Sat. 11-5







# Hassel Smith



*LA-Talmadge Fountain* 1969-1973 Oil on canvas, 69"x 69"

## Figurative Paintings

3 November - 4 December 1982

*Reception for the artist*

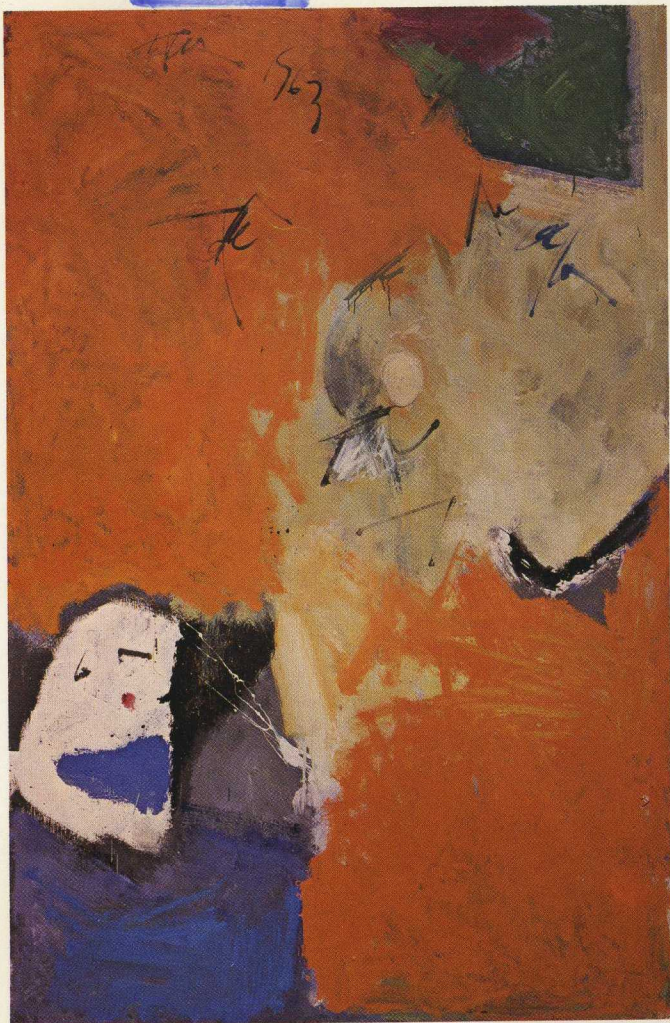
*Wednesday 3 November 5:30 - 7:30*

## Gallery Paule Anglim

14 Geary St. San Francisco California 94108  
(415) 433-2710 Tues.-Fri. 10:30-5:30 Sat. 11-5



# Hassel Smith



*Untitled*, 1963, oil on canvas 69 x 46 in.

## Paintings & Drawings 1950-65

10 October - 10 November 1979

*Reception for the artist*

10 October — 5:30 - 7:30

## Gallery Paule Anglim

710 Montgomery Street San Francisco Ca. 94111

(415) 433-2710 Tues.-Fri. 10:30-5:30 Sat. 12-4

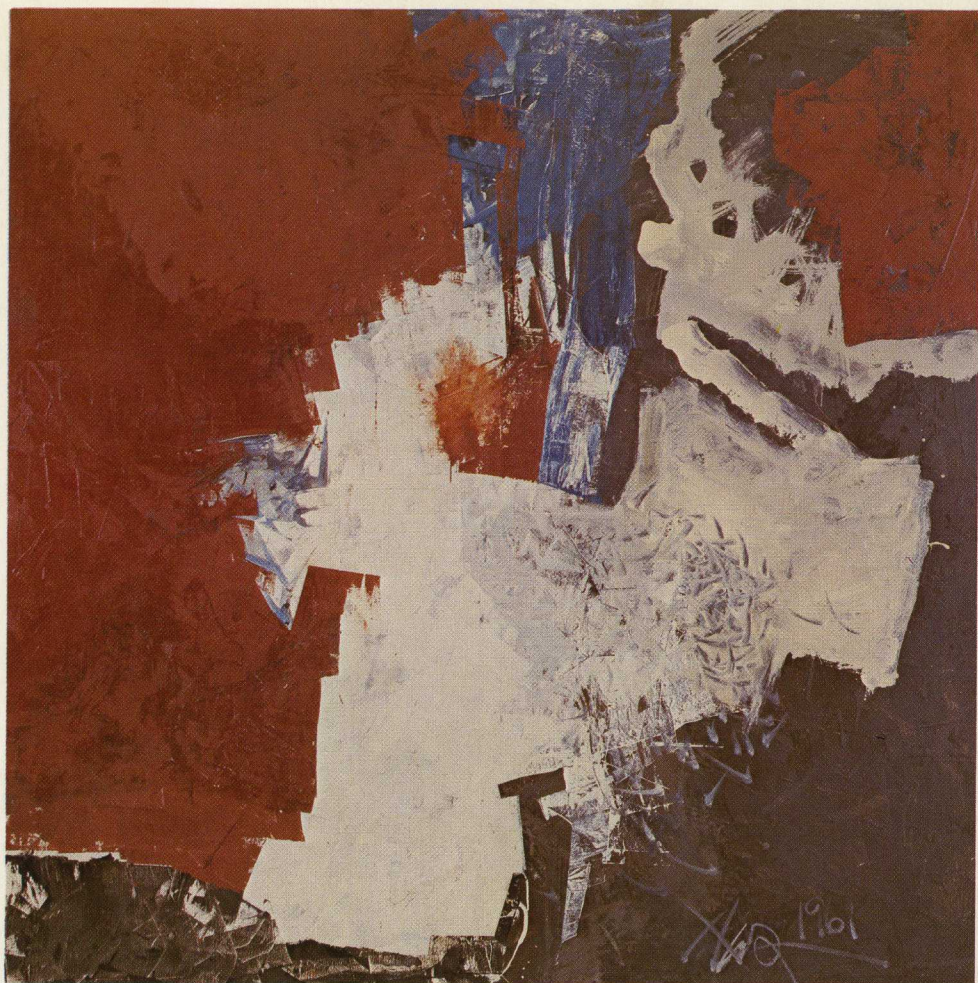
LIBRARY

JAN 11 1980

LOS ANGELES COUNTY  
MUSEUM OF ART



SMITH, H. ONE-MAN



"GARGOYLISM TRIUMPHS AGAIN"  
1961, 68" x 68", Oil on Canvas

# HASSEL SMITH

PAINTINGS 1957-1963

JANUARY 8-FEBRUARY 2, 1980

RECEPTION FOR THE ARTIST, TUESDAY, JANUARY 8, 7-9 P.M.

## TORTUE GALLERY

2917 SANTA MONICA BOULEVARD  
SANTA MONICA, CA 90404

(213) 828-8878  
TUES.-SAT., 11-5:30

# Hassel Smith

*New Work*

3 June—4 July 1987

*Reception for the artist*

*Wednesday 3 June 5:30-7:30*

**Gallery Paule Anglim**

14 Geary St. San Francisco California 94108  
(415) 433-2710 Tues.-Fri. 11-5:30 Sat. 11-5



ONE-MAN

# HASSEL SMITH

*New works from Britannia*

*February 13 thru  
March 10, 1973*

Reception For  
Mr. Smith  
Sunday, Feb. 11, 4-6 P.M.

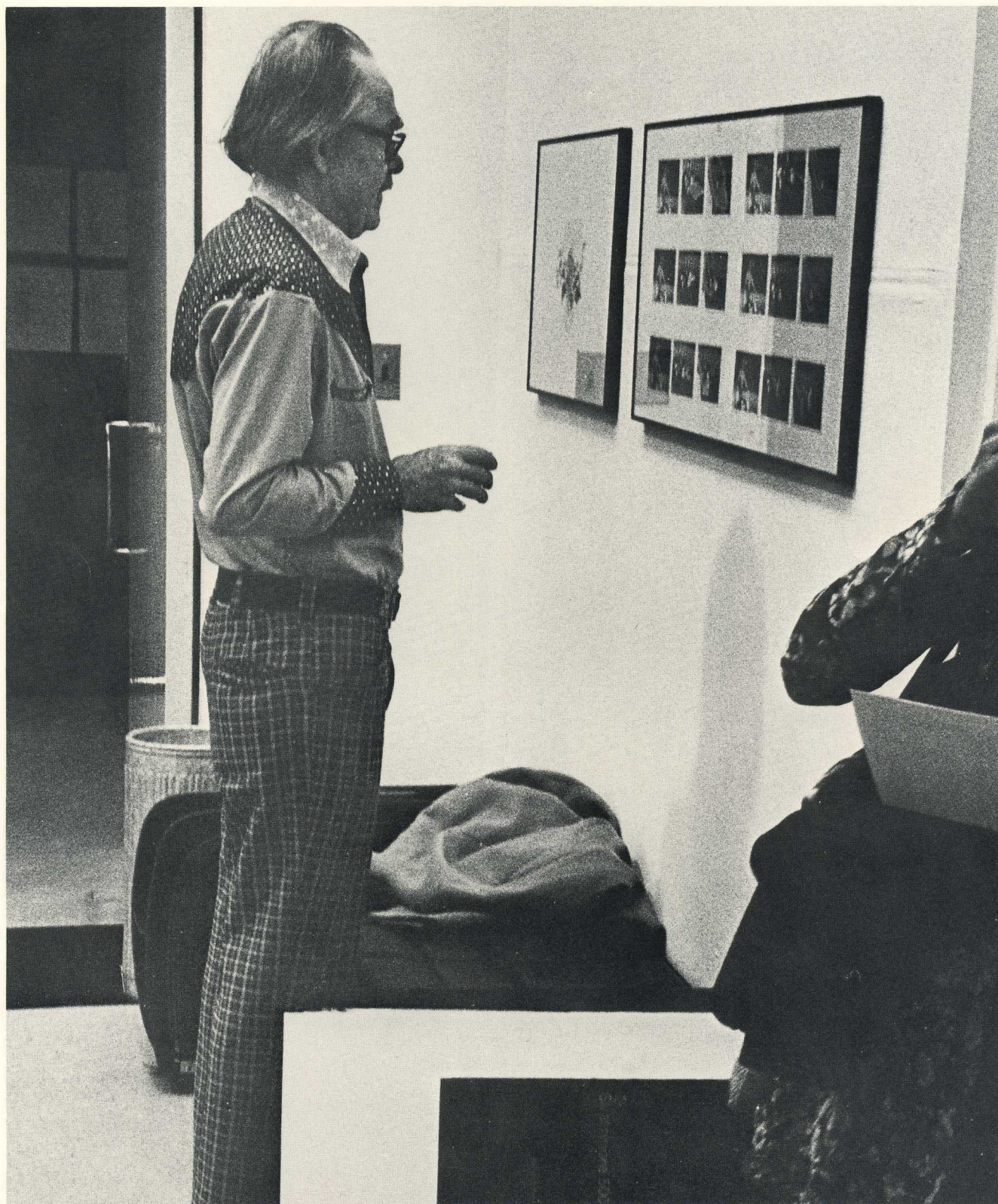
**DAVID STUART GALLERIES**  
807 N LA CIENEGA • LOS ANGELES 69 • OL 2-7422

LIBRARY  
LOS ANGELES COUNTY MUSEUM OF ART  
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA  
FEB 16 1973



SMITH, HASSEL

ONE-MAN



## HASSEL SMITH

New work - Old work

16 May to 1 July 1978

*Reception for artist 16 May 5:30-7:30*

LIBRARY

MAY 5 1978

LOS ANGELES COUNTY  
MUSEUM OF ART

Gallery Paule Anglim

710 Montgomery Street San Francisco Ca. 94111  
(415) 433-2710 Mon.-Fri. 10:30-5:30 Sat. 12-4



HASSEL SMITH

# Press Release

RELEASE DATE:

IMMEDIATE

EXHIBITION:

HASSEL SMITH  
PAINTINGS AND DRAWINGS  
1950-1965

Gallery Paule Anglim

DATES:

OCTOBER 10-NOVEMBER 10, 1979

HOURS:

TUESDAY-FRIDAY 10:30-5:30  
SATURDAY 12:00-4:00

CONTACT:

JANE TROTTER OLESON

JAN - 9 1980

As part of this year's fall schedule, the  
Gallery Paule Anglim is presenting a special exhibition of older paintings by Hassel Smith. Spanning the years 1950 to 1965, this work includes many of Smith's best known paintings in his highly personal and distinctive style.

Hassel Smith has long been recognized as one of the primary figures in the upsurge in Bay Area painting following World War II. Along with Still, Bischoff, Diebenkorn and others, Smith gained broad recognition for his invigorating abstractions and his strident commitment to painting as a personal, unpreconceived investigation.

With broad areas of aggressive color and their now trademark-like loops and semi-geometric shapes, these paintings represent some of Smith's best but seldom seen, earlier works. In the context of Smith's newer, more geometric paintings, this exhibition presents an opportunity for a more comprehensive and historical view of one of the Bay Area's best known painters.

SMITH, HASSEL  
ONE MAN





news

LIBRARY

SEP 20 1978

LOS ANGELES COUNTY  
MUSEUM OF ART

For release: IMMEDIATELY

September 13, 1978

HASSEL SMITH NEW WORK

ON DISPLAY AT ARCO CENTER

LOS ANGELES, Sept. 13-- Hassel Smith, a nationally known abstract expressionist painter of the 1940s and 1950s, will show another facet of his talent with an exhibition of new paintings at the ARCO Center for Visual Art here on Sept. 26.

After moving to Bristol, England, in 1966, Smith's painting changed drastically from expressionistic to an ordered, hard-edge style. The exhibition of this new work will run through Nov. 4.

Continuing in the Center's North Gallery through Oct. 7 are landscape photographs by Laurie Brown.

Located on B Level of the Atlantic Richfield Plaza, 505 S. Flower St., the ARCO Center for Visual Art is open Monday through Friday from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., and on Saturday from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Admission is free.

Validated parking is available on weekdays at 400 S. Flower St., and in the ARCO Tower parking facility at Fifth and Flower Streets on Saturdays.

# # #

For information, contact:

Betty Gold, (213) 488-0038



ONE-MAN

SMITH, RASSEL

LIBRARY  
LOS ANGELES COUNTY MUSEUM OF ART  
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA

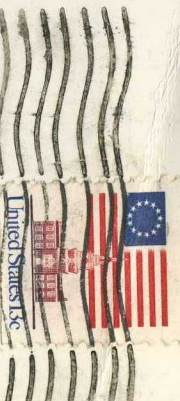
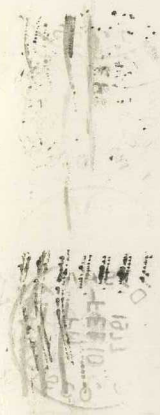
1563



ONE-MAN

# Hassel Smith

LIBRARY  
MAR 4 1977  
LOS ANGELES COUNTY  
MUSEUM OF ART



Gallery Paule Anglim  
Paule Anglim Associates  
710 Montgomery Street  
San Francisco, Ca. 94111

Los Angeles County Museum of Art  
Maurice Tuchman  
5905 Wilshire Blvd  
Los Angeles CA 90036



"...but I would rather be free in a leafless tree than a bird in a gilded cage."

I paint. I also teach painting. A few years ago it occurred to me that the painting I did was not the same as the painting I taught. "Practice what you preach," I thought. Not that I consider it either necessary or desirable to teach students to paint as I paint, but I felt that a reasonable degree of congruity ought to exist between my personal approach to painting and what I say to students about it. The paintings in this exhibition, and others like them from about 1973, represent my efforts to resolve this contradiction and specifically to resolve it in favor of the painting taught.

The paintings in this show are also related to a long-held conviction that painting, MY painting, could be closely related to the arts of music and dance as well as to forms not commonly considered to be ART: game boards, flags, maps, rugs, quilts, and so forth.

Some of these paintings either tend to be or are about games, rules of the game and the strategies required

to win without cheating. ALL of the paintings are about building, being in or getting out of cages, whether gilded or not. About being in and getting out of a cage while leaving the cage intact—Houdini stuff! The images include painting oneself into the middle of a room, papering over doors and windows, sitting on a limb while sawing it off next to the trunk.

The question of SYSTEMS arises, their visual accessibility and recoverability from the finished work. Also involved are considerations like events and intervals, greater or lesser degrees of discursiveness, patterns and predictability.

MANY years ago I had this thought: The blank canvas is in its most ordered state. In a state, metaphorically speaking, of CHAOS. The word is used in its original mythical and only necessary meaning, the time before TIME, the place before PLACE, the ABSOLUTE, the UNIMAGINABLE. Once one understands this, one also understands that with "White Square on White" Malevich brought painting to the edge of the abyss. Away from the precipice, "order" is an entirely relative concept. ART viewed as making "order" out of "chaos" is nonsense.

**Hassel Smith**  
January 1977

## **Hassel Smith**

An exhibition of his works

February 22-March 26, 1977  
Tuesday-Friday 10:30-5:30  
Saturday 12:00-4:00

Reception for the artist  
February 22, 5:30-7:30

Gallery Paule Anglim  
710 Montgomery Street  
San Francisco, Ca. 94111  
(415) 433-2710



Cover: (*Homage to Varda*), 1977, Acrylic on Canvas, 68" x 68"

DNE-MAN

You are cordially invited to  
a preview opening for  
**Hassel Smith**: Recent Paintings,  
Monday night, September 25th,  
from 8 to 10 pm.

☉ ARCO Center For Visual Art  
Atlantic Richfield Plaza, Beneath  
the Twin Towers, Fifth and Flower  
Streets, Los Angeles, California.  
Exhibition dates, September 26th  
through November 4th, 1978.

LIBRARY

DEC 1 1978

LOS ANGELES COUNTY  
MUSEUM OF ART

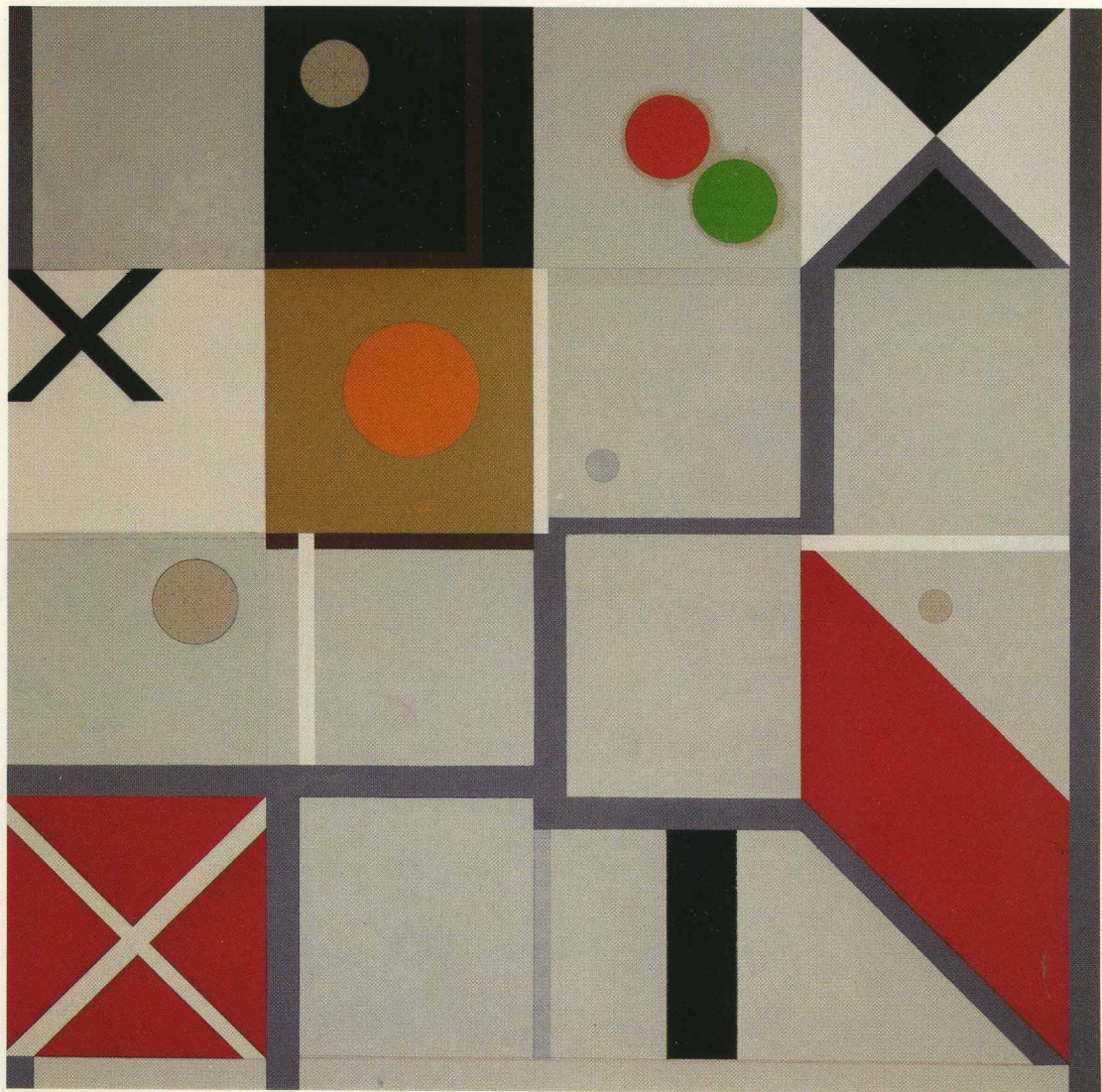


**Arthur Ollman**  
Photographs  
October 16–November 25, 1978

## Photographs

October 16–November 25, 1978

A not-for-profit gallery funded by Atlantic Richfield Company





# HASSEL SMITH

*NEW PAINTINGS*

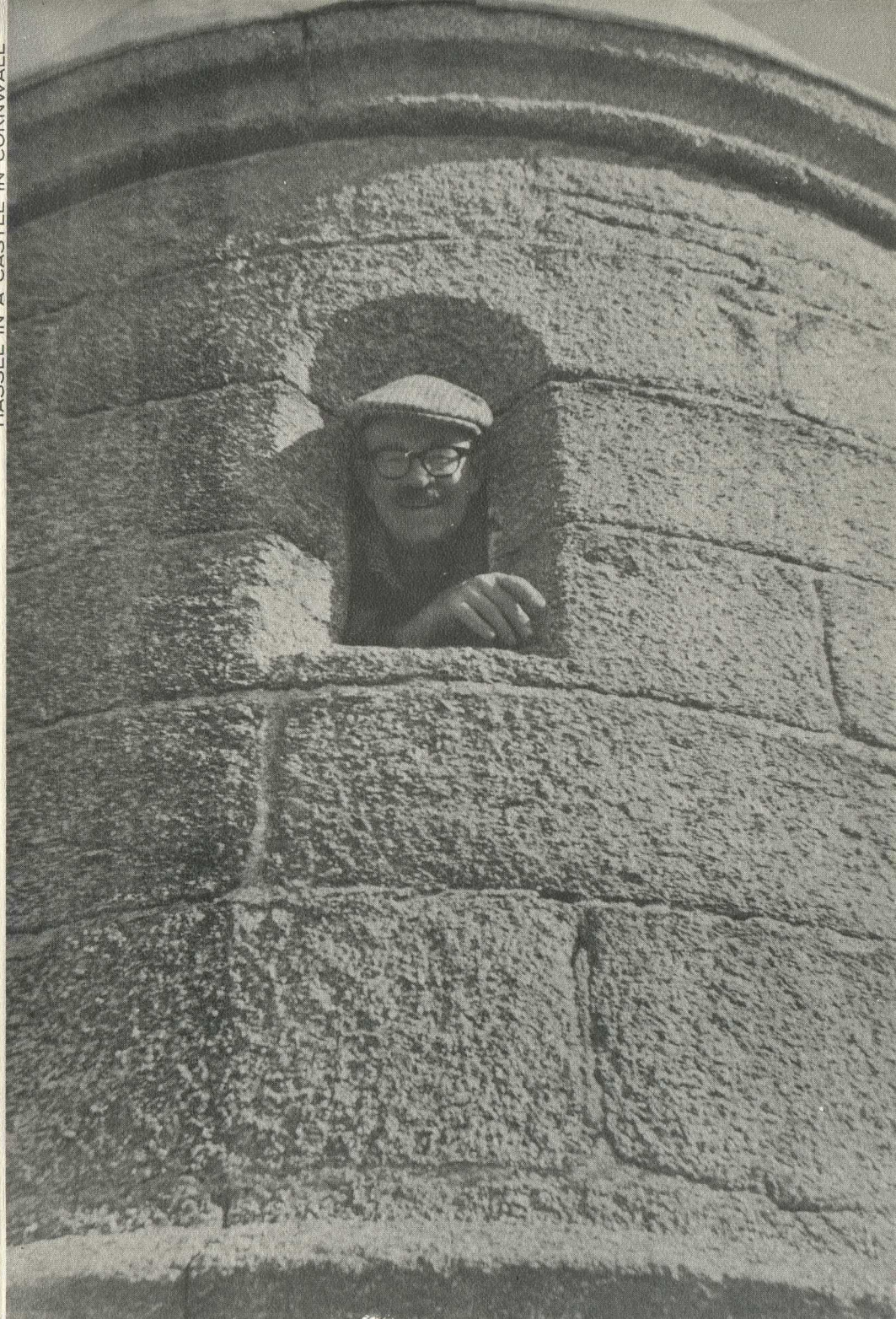
January 6 through February 1, 1964

LIBRARY  
LOS ANGELES COUNTY MUSEUM OF ART  
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA  
JUL 15 1965

**DAVID STUART GALLERIES**

807 N LA CIENEGA • LOS ANGELES 69 • OL 2-7422

HASSEL IN A CASTLE IN CORNWALL





DAVID STUART GALLERIES  
CONTEMPORARY & PRIMITIVE WORKS OF ART  
807 N. LA CIENEGA • LOS ANGELES 69, CALIFORNIA

L. A. 49

301 North Rockway Lane

Mrs. Henry Kewat



ONE-MAN

# HASSEL SMITH

LIBRARY  
LOS ANGELES COUNTY MUSEUM OF ART  
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA





*Self-portrait*

1945

A COMPREHENSIVE  
SURVEY OF THE  
EARLY WORK  
OF HASSEL SMITH  
SELECTED TO  
BE SHOWN





*Self-portrait*

1945

A COMPREHENSIVE  
SURVEY OF THE  
EARLY WORK  
OF HASSEL SMITH  
SELECTED TO  
BE SHOWN  
CONCURRENT WITH  
A SELECTION OF  
PAINTINGS SINCE 1950 AT  
THE PASADENA MUSEUM  
OPENING RECEPTION:  
MONDAY, MARCH 13, 8-10 P.M.  
FERUS GALLERY  
723 NO. LA CIENEGA BLVD.  
LOS ANGELES 46, CALIF.



AN EXHIBITION OF RECENT WORK - FROM MONDAY, JANUARY 29 UNTIL  
SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 1962 - RECEPTION: MONDAY, JAN. 29, 8 UNTIL 10 P.M.

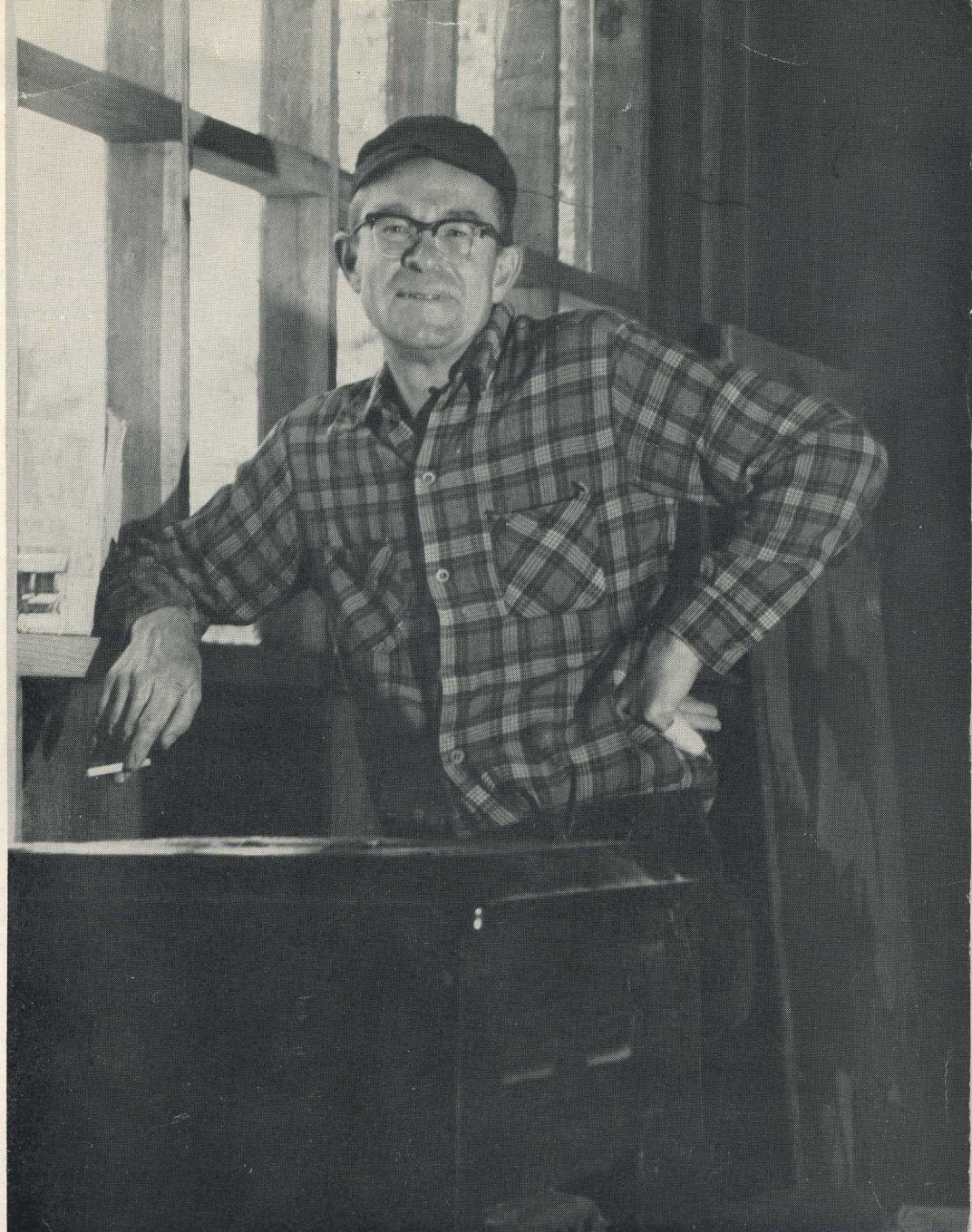
# HASSEL SMITH

AT THE FERUS GALLERY - 723 NORTH LA CIENEGA BOULEVARD  
LOS ANGELES 69, CALIFORNIA - OLYMPIA 2-7859



ONE-MAN

SMITH, H.



# HASSEL SMITH

**sfaa GALLERY**

MARCH 8 through 29, 1957

CALIFORNIA SCHOOL  
OF FINE ARTS

800 Chestnut Street  
San Francisco, California

LIBRARY  
LOS ANGELES COUNTY MUSEUM OF ART  
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA





*Excerpts from a letter to friends staying in Italy.*

Sebastopol, California  
February, 1957

"Dear M..... and R.....,

"... having always had a lot to say about art and painting, and for that and other reasons being no longer so talkative, I nevertheless would not want you to suppose that my reticence implies a lack of conviction, prejudice or passion. I still maintain, like Dante, my private hell into which I can, and often do, hurl such of my predecessors as displease me—Rubens, Leonardo (the painter), Michelangelo, El Greco (who probably enjoys being there among the flame-like flames), Rodin, Manet, Matisse—a distinguished company, as you can see. Some go to Paradise, naturally, and there Uccello, Leonardo (the mechanic and draughtsman), Botticelli, the elder Bruegel, Bernini, Adriaen Brouwer, Jan Steen, Magnasco, Caravaggio, Gerard David, Gentile Bellini, the Van Eycks, Guardi, Gauguin and Munch disport themselves. Finally, for tradition's sake, an elysian field for Hokusai, Hiroshige and those nameless Roman sculptors, slaves perhaps, who, if they did not invent, proliferated magnificently upon the portrait bust.

"New candidates are constantly being dispatched to these celestial and subterranean spheres . . . any nominations?

\* \* \*

"Speaking of our worthy forebears, how goes your first first-hand look at the Italian Renaissance? Certainly it is a period against which the antiquaries, the academic critics and historians have conspired to make it difficult to understand. They have after all pretty well put over the pessimistic notion that human endeavor reached its peak, its zenith, in the 5th B.C. and that any *lesser* summits were reached, as in the Renaissance, by way of the rediscovery of Attic Greek culture. Getting the blinders off, tho, can't we see that the discovery of, or reawakening of interest in, Greek culture, and in particular the coming to light of certain pieces of Greek statuary, acted as a reactionary and restraining influence upon the radical culture of the Renaissance period. Vernacular speech and literature, the printing press, the scientific method, the rise of an urban capitalist middle class, perspective geometry and drawing . . . those were at once the roots and the fruits of the real renaissance, the real awakening of modern European culture. In so far as the discovery (Is it accurate to speak as tho nothing of the sort had ever been seen before? I doubt it.) of various monuments of Greek civilization affected this process of change, its effect must have been antipodal to the basic sense of the process.

"In our own field, that is, in drawing and painting, we should be able to see that the really radical idea was that of perspective . . . a new geometry and system for re-creating or representing the appearance of objects in deep space. Opposed to this idea and receiving encouragement from the fortuitous discovery of various pieces of Greek statuary (they shouldn't be called 'sculpture') was the idea of chiaroscuro—'coal dust modeling,' as it has been called—a system which (in Leonardo's damning phrase) aimed to create in painting 'the effect of low relief.'

"The paganism, the anthropomorphism, the mythology of the Greeks had, to be sure, an enlivening effect upon the *subject* matter of some Italian painters (Botticelli, Titian, Mantegna, Signorelli, Cosimo, etc.). Even so, *formal* reaction triumphed in the so-called 'Golden Age' and its standards have been the official European ones ever since. We should not overlook, tho, painters like Guardi, Caravaggio, Salvator Rosa, and Magnasco, who have been for centuries in official disfavor (while their contemporary, the *arch*confectioner, Tiepolo, is applauded), precisely because they rebelled against the reactionary doctrines enshrined in the 'Golden Age.'



"I still prefer jazz to 'good music.' Yearn, tho, for the period, now unhappily passed, when we could go out and DANCE to the music of a good band without shelling out half a week's earnings. It's spiritually and physically frustrating to have to sit and listen when the music is saying, 'Move.'

\* \* \*

"Yes, I still paint in a non-objective manner. When we first moved to the ranch, I had no suitable place in which to paint (I have built a studio since then and am working in it for a show at the San Francisco Art Association Gallery), and anyway, I didn't feel like painting. It seemed to me then that painting, non-objective painting and all the rest of it too—all the stuff that had gone on in San Francisco and New York and elsewhere—had reached a dead end, a quitting place. Quite a few of the painters were going back to representationalism, some snide, some forthright, and for a year or more I contemplated doing likewise, but couldn't get with it (painted a couple of lousy landscapes), and so did nothing.

"But when the studio was finished and with this show coming up, I started to paint and there seemed just no question of how it would go in spite of all the headwork to the contrary. After all I painted representationally for quite a spell and going back would be for me *really* going back—and, in any case, I find I still believe in my reasons for painting in the non-objective way in the first place. After all, and when you come to think about it, painting for hundreds of years celebrated the works of (to use a Billingsly and Stork Club crowd phrase which I HATE) the Big Boy Upstairs, and that was its function—to be in praise of, to be on its knees about. Painting for all those years was, to be frank about it, a *religious* function and never was intended to communicate anything in the literal sense—a sense which has after all been forced upon it only in the recent period of time. Rarely, if at all, did a painter seize the fire, the thunderbolt of Zeus, and *create* something, tho of course an enormous amount of good painting of the celebrating sort was done and I have nothing against it. The few prometheans among painters found themselves to be blasphemers, for on the other side of the representational coin that is about all you could be. Of these Picasso is the greatest blasphemer—those flounder-faced women made out of rattan and wicker don't after all flatter the Creator's work too much. It was my feeling when I first elected the non-objective or non-figurative way that it was better to *CREATE* something and risk being chained to the rock than to go on in that endless rat race of celebration and blasphemy, especially since moderns

don't really believe in God anyway, and only when they really do can they honestly praise his works or inveigh against them.

"And so I prefer to make something neither more nor less understandable than nature's works and no less permanent than some, and a lot more permanent than others. To the guy who asks me 'What is that? what is *THAT* supposed to be?' (and, believe me, I am not scornful of him) I can only say in the deathless words of King Louis the First, 'Man if you have to ask, you will never know.'

Love,  
Hassel"





Hassel Smith was born in the midwest, in Sturgis, Michigan, but had extensive experience of California rather early in his life when he lived with his family in Los Angeles, San Mateo and Mill Valley. After a short period back in Michigan, the family again came west and he finished high school in San Mateo.

However he returned to the Great Lakes region for a degree in art history at Northwestern University, Evanston, Illinois. After that four-year stint he appears to have made a permanent choice in favor of the Pacific coast, for he came to San Francisco and studied art for three years at the California School of Fine Arts under Macky, Randolph, Sterne, Oldfield, Bertrand and other well-known names of that time.

During 1940 and 1941 Mr. Smith lived at Angel's Camp in the Mother Lode country, part of this time as a Rosenberg Fellow. In 1942 he was employed as a social worker for the Farm Security Administration in Bakersfield and Arvin, California. It was in the latter town that he met and married June Dorothy Myers. Then for two years he worked as a timber scaler for the Forest Service in McKenzie River, Oregon.

For the next ten years, 1945 to 1955, Hassel painted and taught art. From 1945 until 1948 he instructed in lithography, life drawing and painting at the CSFA. After a one-year hiatus of teaching at the Oregon State University in Eugene, he returned to CSFA to continue teaching. He remained at CSFA until 1951 when he became a member of the teaching staff at the Presidio Hill Elementary School where he taught arts and crafts until 1955 at which time he moved himself, his wife and his small son, Joey, to Sebastopol. There he grows apples and operates a summer art school, the Sonoma Open-Air Art School, in partnership with Robert McChesney.

**Fifth exhibition  
ROBERT McCHESNEY  
April 5 through 26, 1957**

*All photographs  
by Andre Moreau*

*Editor, Isabel Hood  
Printed by A. Carlisle & Co.*

PRINTED  
IN  
U.S.A.

90 



## CATALOGUE

Number 1 ... 1952

Number 2 ... 1953

Number 3 ... 1954

Number 4 ... 1955

*loaned through the courtesy  
of Mr. and Mrs. Andre Moreau*

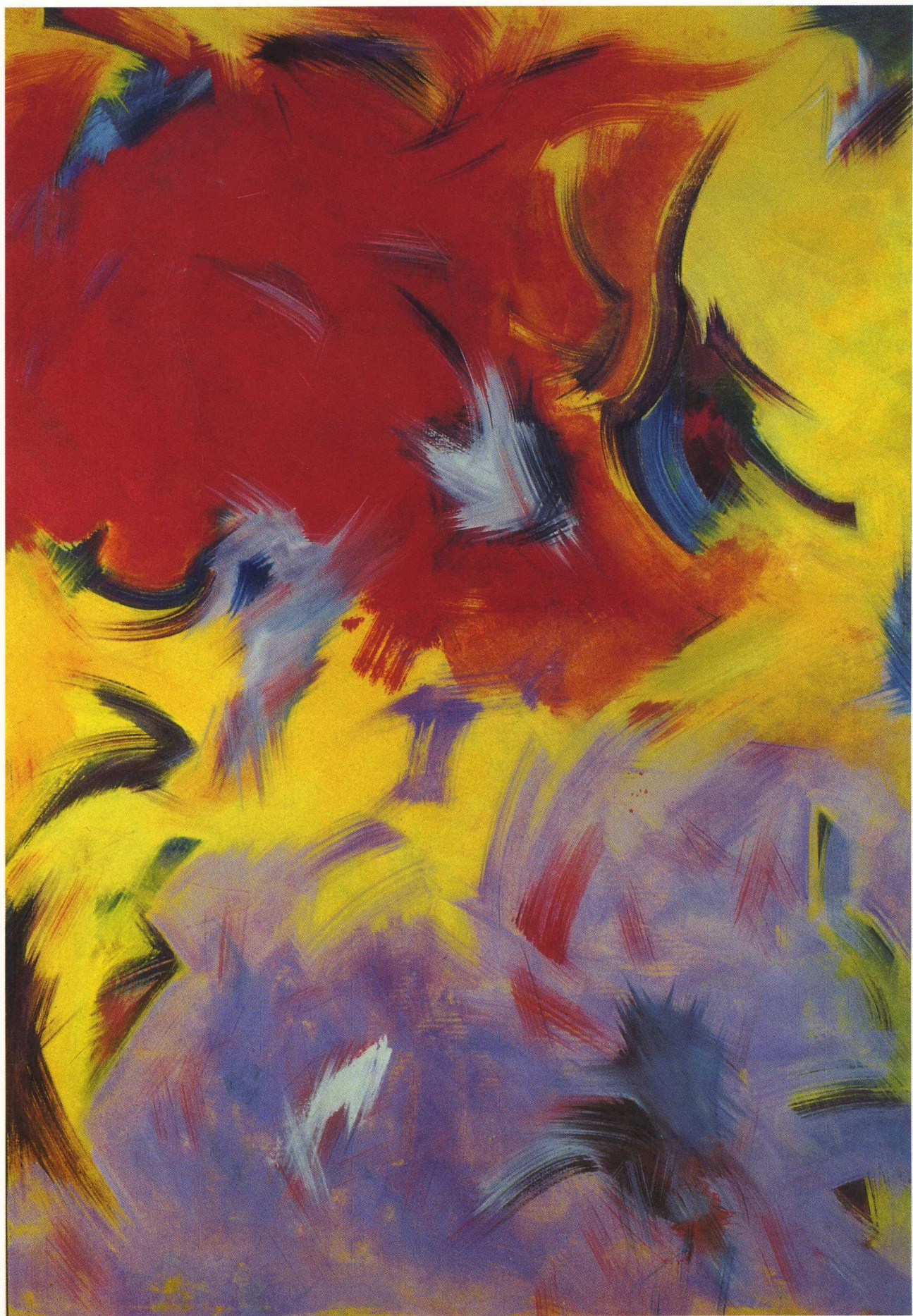
Number 5 ... 1955

*loaned through the courtesy  
of Mr. and Mrs. Andre Moreau*

Number 6 ... 1955

Numbers 7—15 ... 1957









*Untitled (6-92), 1992 acrylic on canvas, 68" x 48"*



# HASSEL SMITH

ARTIST RECEPTION

Saturday, May 3, 1997

7 o'clock p.m. - 10 o'clock p.m.

Exhibition continues through June 1, 1997

MENDENHALL GALLERY

41 North Fair Oaks Avenue, Pasadena, California 91103, (818) 792-0162



**BORN:**

Sturgis, Michigan, 1915

**EDUCATION:**

B.S. Northwestern University, Evanston, IL, 1936  
California School of Fine Arts, San Francisco, CA, 1936-1938

**AWARDS:**

Rosenberg Fellowship for Independent Study in Painting, 1941-42  
"For Distinguished Service to American Art", \$5000 award from the National Endowment for the Arts, 1967  
"For Outstanding Achievement in Painting," ART commission of the city and county of San Francisco, CA, 1981  
"Distinguished Career Award," Peter & Madeleine Martin Foundation, San Francisco, CA, 1990  
Honorary Doctor of Fine Art, San Francisco Art Institute, San Francisco, CA, 1991

**TEACHING EXPERIENCE:****Instructor:**

California School of Fine Art, San Francisco, CA 1945-53  
University of Oregon, Eugene, OR, 1947-48  
University of California, Los Angeles, CA, 1965-66  
Bristol Polytechnic, Bristol, England, 166-81  
Cardiff College of Art, Cardiff, Wales, UK, 1978-81

**Visiting Artist:**

University of California, Davis, CA, January-March 1973, April-June 1975  
University of California Berkeley, CA 1977-78; 1979-80  
San Francisco Art Institute, San Francisco, CA, Summer Session, 1978, 1979; Fall Semester, 1979-80; Guest Artist, March 1981

**SOLO EXHIBITION:**

University of Oregon Gallery, Eugene, OR, 1947  
California Palace of the Legion of Honor, San Francisco, CA, 1948, 1953  
Labaudt Gallery, San Francisco, CA, 1949, 1950  
East-West Gallery, San Francisco, CA, 1954, 1956  
King Ubu Gallery, San Francisco, CA 1955  
Dilexi Gallery, San Francisco, CA, 1956, 1957, 1958, 1959, 1960, 1961, 1962  
New Arts Gallery, Houston, TX, 1956, 1959  
California School of Fine Arts Gallery, San Francisco, CA, 1958  
Reed College, Portland, OR, 1959  
Gimpel Fils Gallery, London, England, 1960, 1963  
Andre Emmerich Gallery, New York, NY, 1961, 1962, 1963  
Retrospective Exhibition, Pasadena Art Museum, CA 1961  
Galleria del Ariete, Milan, Italy, 1962  
David Stuart Gallery, Los Angeles, CA, 1964, 1965, 1966, 1973  
University of Minnesota Art Gallery, 1964  
Retrospective Exhibition, Gallery Lounge, San Francisco State College, San Francisco, CA 1964  
Worth Ryder Memorial Gallery, University of California, Berkeley, Berkeley, CA, 1964  
Bristol Art Gallery, Bristol, England, Spring 1972  
Suzanne Saxe Gallery, San Francisco, CA, 1970, 1973  
University of Houston Art Gallery, Houston, TX, 1974  
Retrospective Exhibition, San Francisco, Museum of Modern Art, San Francisco, CA, October-November 1975  
Atlantic-Richfield Center for Visual Arts, Los Angeles, CA, October-November 1978  
Tortue Gallery, Los Angeles, CA, February-March 1980  
Gallery Paule Anglim, San Francisco, CA, February-March 1977, March 1981, November 1982  
Oakland Museum, Oakland CA, March-April 1981  
San Jose Museum of Art, San Jose, CA, March-April 1983  
BlumHelman Gallery, Santa Monica, CA, April-May 1987  
Gallery Paule Anglim, San Francisco, CA, June 1987  
College of Notre Dame, Belmont, CA, February-March 1988  
Gallery 44, Oakland, CA, February-March 1988  
Monterey Museum of Art, Monterey, CA, April-May 1988

Cleveland Bridge Gallery, Bath, England, May 1988  
Lannetti Lanzoni, San Francisco, CA, October 1988  
London '89 contemporary Art Fair, London, England, March-April 1989  
Studio Gallery, London, England, October 1995  
Mendenhall Gallery, Pasadena, CA, May 1997

**GROUP EXHIBITIONS:**

San Francisco Art Association Annual Show, San Francisco, CA, 1945, prize  
"Park-Bischoff-Smith," San Francisco Museum of Art, San Francisco, CA, 1950  
San Francisco Painters, Washington University, Seattle, WA, 1950  
Group of San Francisco Painters, Walker Art Gallery, Minneapolis, MN, 1950  
"Diebenkorn and Smith," Labaudt Gallery, San Francisco, CA, 1950  
"Corbett-Smith," California School of Fine Arts Gallery, 1952  
"New Language in Painting," San Francisco Painters, Jewish Youth Center, New York, NY, 1954  
Santa Monica Pier Merry-Go-Round Shoe, Santa Monica, CA, 1955  
New Trends Show, Contemporary Arts Museum, Houston, TX, 1956  
Los Angeles County Museum Annual, Los Angeles, CA, 1957  
Dilexi Gallery, San Francisco, CA, 1960, 1961, 1962, 1963, 1964  
East and West Coast Painters, Gimpel Fils Gallery, London, England, 1961  
Albright Museum Invitational, 1961  
Gallery Group, Gallery Laurence, Paris, France, 1961  
Gallery Group, Hanover Gallery, Zurich, Switzerland, 1961  
Painters of the Pacific, traveling show from Auckland, New Zealand, 1962  
Painters of the Southwest, traveling out of Fort Worth, TX, 1962  
Carnegie International, 1962  
Whitney Museum Bi-Annual, New York, NY, 1962  
Cochran Museum Invitational, 1962  
San Francisco Museum of Art, Invitational, San Francisco, CA, 1962  
California Palace of the Legion of Honor, Winter Invitational, San Francisco, CA, 1961-62, prize, 1962  
John Moore's Annual Invitational, Liverpool, England, 1963  
Smith-Woelffer, Marylhurst College, OR, 1964  
Gallery Group, David Stuart Gallery, Los Angeles, CA 1963  
Art and Non-Art, Occidental College, Los Angeles, CA, 1964  
"A Period of Exploration," The Oakland Museum, Oakland, CA, 1973  
"Painting and Sculpture in California: The Modern Era," San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, San Francisco, CA, September-November 1976, and Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C., May-September 1977  
"American Painters Living in England," sponsored by Winsor Newton & Co. Ltd., and traveling to Leeds, Hull and other museums in England, November 1976 through an indefinite period  
DeFeo, Neri, Smith et al., Gallery Puale Anglim, San Francisco, CA, January 1979  
DeFeo-Smith, March 1982  
Smith-Anderson Gallery, Palo Alto, CA, June 1987  
John Berggruen Gallery, San Francisco, CA, November 1985  
BlumHelman, Los Angeles, CA, June 1987  
Strong-Smith, July 1987  
DeFeo, Neri, Smith et al., Gallery Puale Anglim, San Francisco, CA, July 1987  
Gallery Group, Albemarle Gallery, London, England, August 1987  
"Lost and Found in California: Four Decades of Assemblage Art," James Corcoran Gallery, Santa Monica, CA, July-September 1988  
"King Ubu Retrospective," Natsoulas/Novelzo Gallery, Davis, CA, January-February 1989  
Cleveland Bridge Gallery, Bath, England, April 1989  
"Abstract Expressionism," Laguna Art Museum, Laguna Beach, CA, January-April 1996  
"Abstract Expressionism," San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, San Francisco, CA, July-September 1996  
"San Francisco School of Abstract Expressionism 1940's to 1960's," Mendenhall Gallery, Pasadena, CA, October 1996

**SELECTED PRIVATE COLLECTIONS:**

William Roth, Sausalito, CA  
Gifford Phillips, Los Angeles, CA  
Robert Rowan, Los Angeles, CA  
Janss, Los Angeles, CA  
De Menil Foundation, Houston, TX  
De Young Museum, San Francisco, CA  
Crocker Art Gallery, Sacramento, CA  
Harrison Museum, Logan, UT  
Lauter, San Francisco, CA  
Pulitzer, St. Louis, MS  
Hirshhorn, New York City, NY, & Washington D.C.  
Lannon, Chicago, IL, & Dallas, TX  
Hedy La Marr, Los Angeles, CA  
Weisman, Los Angeles, CA  
Murchason, Dallas, TX  
Factor, Los Angeles, CA  
Emmerich, New York, NY  
Dr. Louis Heyn, Los Angeles, CA  
Mason Wells, San Francisco, CA  
Byron Meyer, San Francisco, CA  
Silva, Swig etc., San Francisco, CA  
Mme. Lillas, Geneva, Switzerland  
Douglas Watson, San Francisco, CA  
Phyllis Hattis, San Francisco, CA  
C. Swig, San Francisco, CA  
Cooper, Phoenix, AZ  
Flagg, Pebble Beach, CA

**SELECTED PUBLIC COLLECTIONS:**

Tate Gallery, London, England  
Albright-Knox Gallery, Buffalo, NY  
Corcoran Gallery, Washington, D.C.  
St. Louis Museum of Art, St. Louis, MS  
Pasadena Museum of Art, Pasadena, CA  
Atlantic Richfield  
Security Pacific  
University of New Mexico  
IBM  
Art Museum, University of California, Berkeley, CA  
San Francisco Museum of Art, San Francisco, CA  
New York State University Gallery, New York, NY  
Whitney Museum, New York Gallery, New York, NY  
Washington University, St. Louis, MS  
Dallas Museum of Contemporary Art, Dallas, TX  
Los Angeles County Museum, Los Angeles, CA  
Oakland Museum, CA  
Houston Museum of Art, TX  
Phillips Gallery, Washington, D.C.  
Palm Springs Desert Museum, CA  
Stanford University Museum of Art, Palo Alto, CA



ONE-MAN

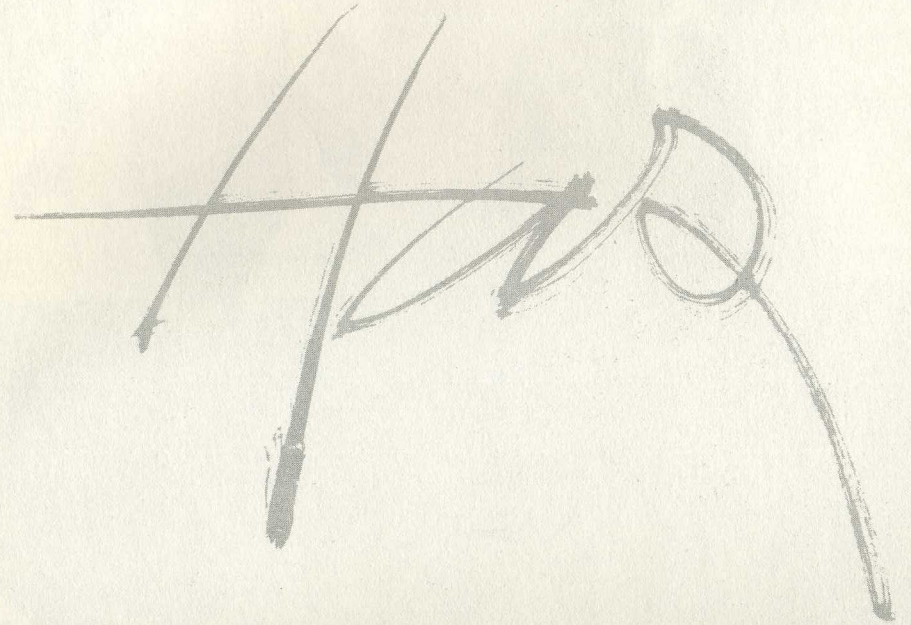
# HASSEL SMITH

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MUSEUM OF ART





DECEMBER 8 - JANUARY 16

(GALLERY CLOSED DEC. 25 - JAN. 4)

DILEXI GALLERY • SAN FRANCISCO



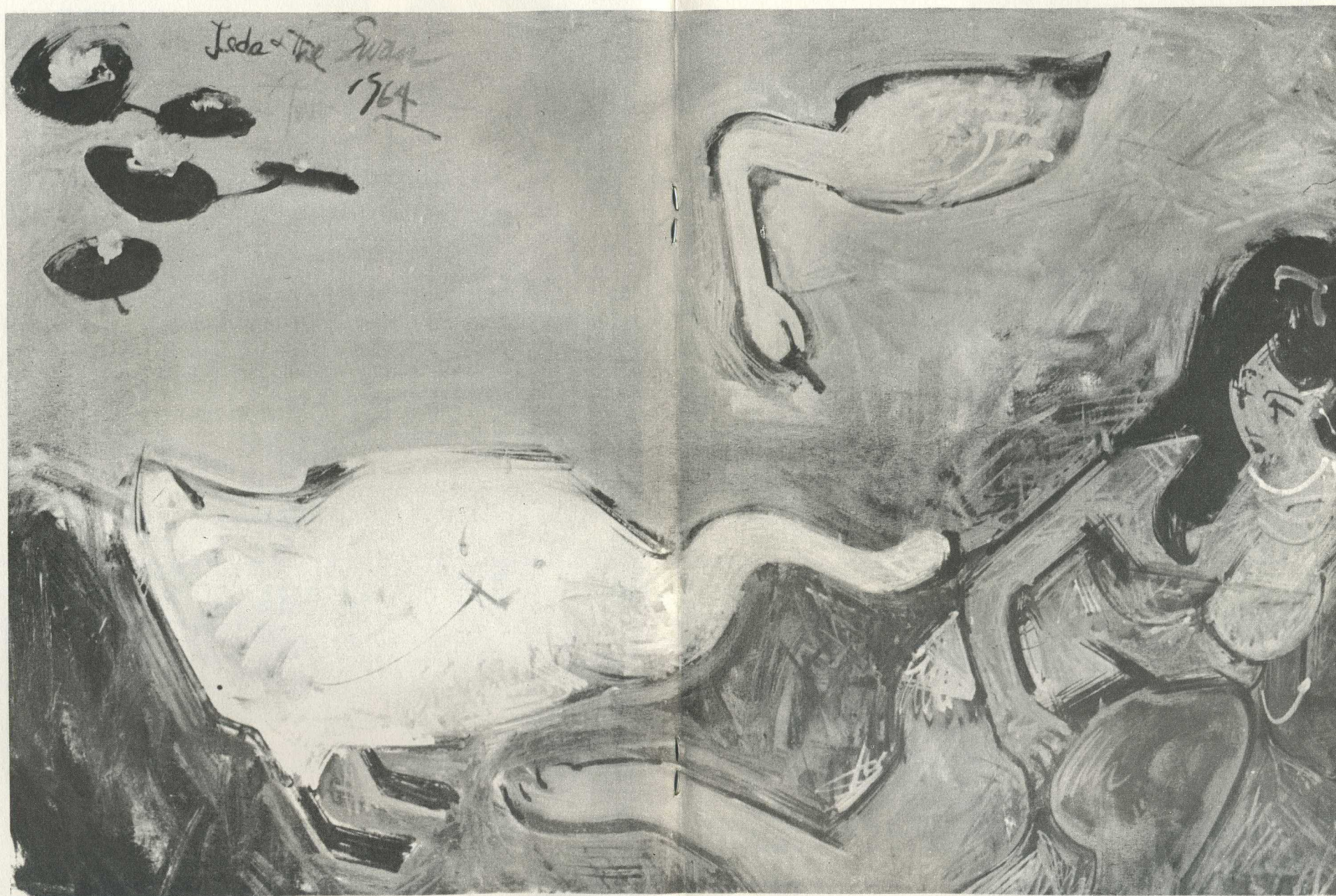


JAIL BAIT, 69" x 46", 1964



TWISTING, 72" x 24", 1964





LEDA & THE SWAN, 46" x 69", 1964





FEMALE FIGURE WITH DOG, 72" x 24", 1964

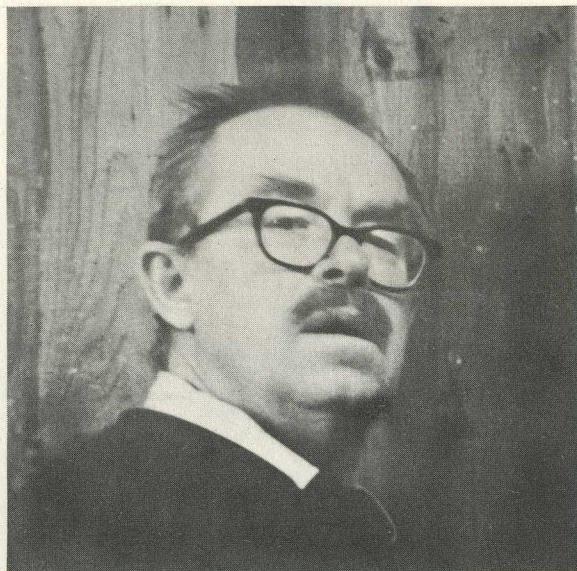


TOURISTS, 18" x 48", 1964



THE BLUE HARD-TOP, 18" x 48", 1964





## HASSEL SMITH

Born 1915 — Sturgis, Michigan  
High School — San Mateo, California  
College — Northwestern University, 1936  
California School of Fine Arts, San Francisco, 1936-1938  
Abraham Rosenberg Fellowship for Independent Study, 1941-42  
Taught Painting at California School of Fine Arts, 1945-1952  
Lives in Sebastopol, California

### ONE-MAN SHOWS:

California Palace of the Legion of Honor, San Francisco, 1947, 1953  
East & West Gallery, San Francisco, 1953  
Ferus Gallery, Los Angeles, 1956, 1959, 1960, 1961, 1962  
San Francisco Art Association Gallery, San Francisco, 1957  
Dilexi Gallery, San Francisco, 1958, 1962  
New Arts Gallery, Houston, 1958, 1959, 1961  
Gimpel Fils, London, 1960, 1963  
Pasadena Art Museum, Pasadena, 1961  
Andre Emmerich Gallery, New York, 1961, 1962, 1963  
Galleria dell' Ariete, Milan, 1962  
David Stuart Gallery, Los Angeles, 1964  
San Francisco State College, San Francisco, 1964  
University of California, Berkeley, 1964

### PUBLIC COLLECTIONS:

Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo, New York  
Baltimore Museum of Art, Baltimore, Maryland  
City Art Museum, St. Louis, Missouri  
Dallas Museum of Fine Arts, Dallas, Texas  
New York University, New York, New York  
Oakland Art Museum, Oakland, California  
Pasadena Art Museum, Pasadena, California  
San Francisco Museum of Art, San Francisco, California  
The Tate Gallery, London, England  
Washington University, St. Louis, Missouri  
Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, New York



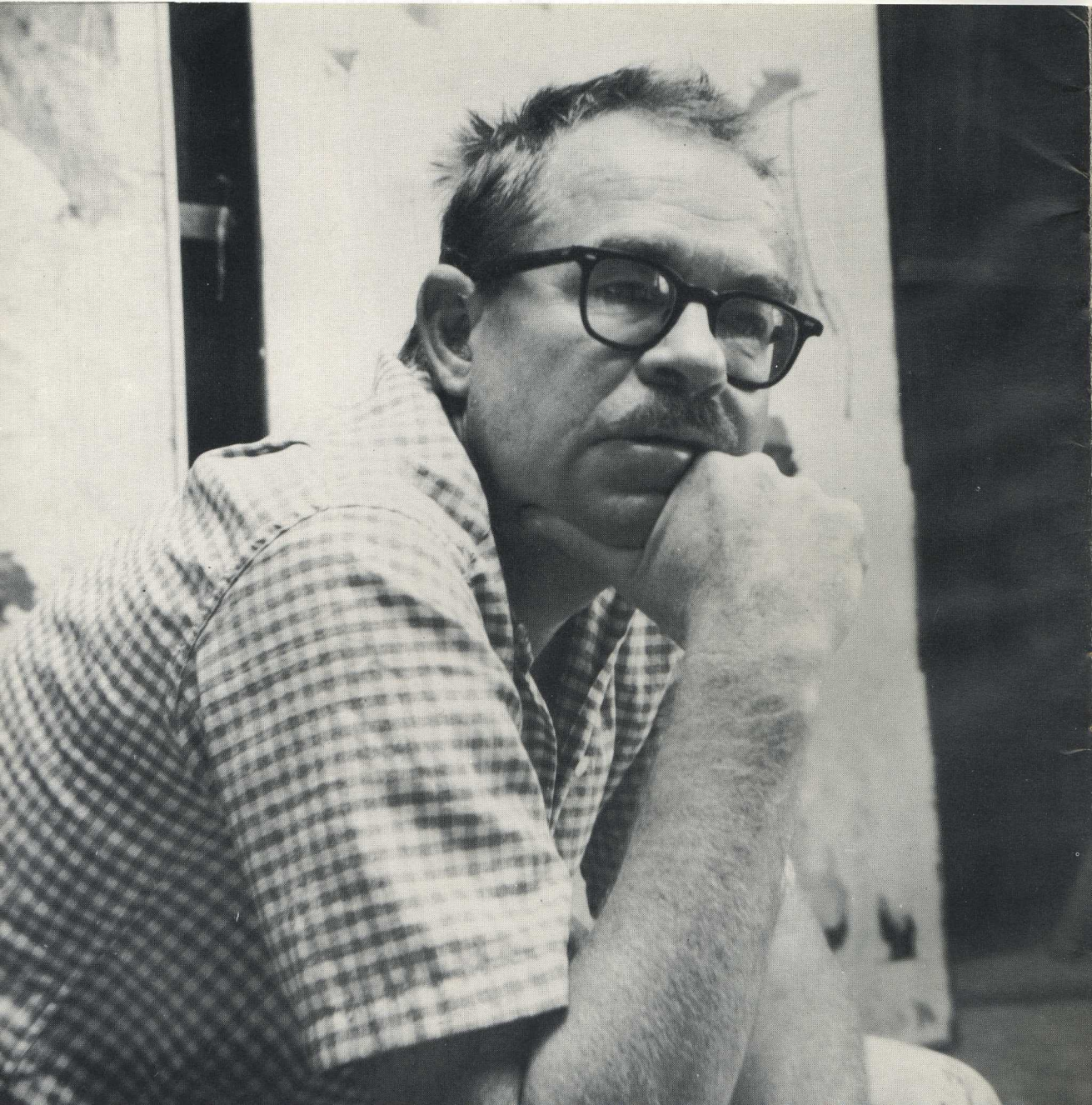
ONE-MAN

SMITH, H

LIBRARY  
LOS ANGELES COUNTY MUSEUM OF ART  
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA

HASSEL SMITH







*André Emmerich Gallery • 17 East 64th Street • New York*

*First New York Exhibition*

# HASSEL SMITH

*February 15 to March 11, 1961*



Hassel Smith rarely—and then only on his own terms—lets the space between heaven and earth cool his mind. His concern, as he says himself, is with the thunderbolt.

"It was my feeling when I first elected the non-objective or non-figurative way," he once wrote, "that it was better to *create* something and risk being chained to the rock than to go on in that endless rat race of celebration and blasphemy." He regards the representational mainstream in painting as having been a celebration of interests involved in patronage, a ritualistic tribute to values that were resident in a desired image of man and his setting but which, Smith feels, do not reside in acts proper to painting as an art. Moreover, he believes that in its own right this image has lost its former uplifting power, and that artists who make subjects of objects today remain in the grip of a past to which their commitment may take only an impious turn. "Of these," he said, "Picasso is the greatest blasphemer—those flounder-faced women made out of rattan and wicker don't after all flatter the Creator's work too much." Unlike painters who claw the image before they scratch their heads, Smith would find neither refuge nor revelry through picturing indignities.

A few years ago he was discouraged, for a while, with the course all painting was taking. "It seemed to me then that painting, non-objective painting and all the rest of it too—all the stuff that had gone on in San Francisco and New York and elsewhere—had reached a dead end, a quitting place. Quite a few of the painters," he went on, "were going back to representationalism, some snide, some forthright, and for a year or more I contemplated doing likewise, but couldn't get with it." The productive resurgence of his conviction, demonstrated here in its latest phase, began early in 1957. "I find," he declared then, "I still believe in my reasons for painting in the non-objective way in the first place."

Before his first decision, made many years earlier, Smith was a brilliant repre-







sentational painter. Trained in the mode, he found its guidance spurious. From his point of view the manner was not only more a social toady than a way of art, to him it was also a cold affair, maintained by claims that mask an insensible demand on the artist. For him representational painting amounts to a specious graft of separable and often divided interests, requiring diverted attention in either instance, producing symbols the painter is at length called upon to piece together. Its art, in Smith's sense of the word, shows mainly at the seams. Under the spell of this form, the painter must state: the thing is there, I'm here, and a canvas is propped between. Interruptions are built into the process. They offer the obliging painter conveniences—formal reprieves from sustained concentration on an aesthetic fulfillment of his course—and grant him time out to construct an imagery having little to do with energies that might be burgeoning at the seams. The fatal stroke to integrity comes when the painter is expected to bring all the parts together in the pretense that they belong to each other, making a disjointed experience seem articulate. To cover the fraud, the guile of many generations was employed in building an archive of precepts, instructions and excuses for pictorial composition.

Proposed as a cure for confusion, such applied composition could at best become hardly more than a persuasive disguise for disparities in experience that may not be reconciled. For all the impassioned words written about composition, as a theoretical case it was, basically, a cold-blooded strategy. Smith is immune to them: his determination brooks no chill. He never pauses in deference to those who have been gulled into mistaking signs of arbitrary regimentation for the hallmarks of aesthetic order. Devoted to marking his canvases in accordance with meanings that keep hotly relevant from beginning to beginning, he has no use for the freezing conventions of composition. In his form the seams have so widely parted that no gusset could suppress the energies which pervade the field. Rather than interrupt his course to permit a diversionary rigging of the form, intervals in his painting







punctuate a cadence that is everywhere consistent with the progression of an aesthetic idea.

Smith does not, of course, deny the presence of aesthetic ingredients in past forms. At one time, with humor, he drew up a list of old masters, noting after each name a credit or debit in this respect. It is doubtful that any painter educated in the craft could altogether erase earlier forms and their implications from his mind, although, like Smith, he might view them with a critical eye. As he works, he works somehow within a tradition. If, like Smith, he is not a representational painter, tradition will be disclosed to him almost solely through surviving paintings. Recourse to the early literature about art would yield little that is pertinent to his concerns. Affected in its formation by mixed motives, the tradition of art—as apart from the unspoken tradition of artists—has been abetted by writers who chose to speak only of those aspects which bear away from the problem held paramount by many artists today. In the early prescriptions of how and what the artist was to paint, the emphasis was on how to represent things, on what subjects were thought to be ennobling, and on how to pull the figured surface together so that co-existence would seem orderly. Art, as artists see it now, received scant attention. Spokesmen for culture had other uses for the crop. What is wheat to the artist today was chaff to the writers before, and from them today's artists inherit the wind. But occasionally, in an aside, a chronicler recorded an observation about the habits of individual artists which suggests that the insight Smith admires was not always wanting.

Hazlitt, for example, followed a comparison of Coleridge with Wordsworth with a revealing anecdote. "Coleridge's manner," he commented, "is more full, animated, and varied; Wordsworth's more equable, sustained, and internal." Then he added: "Coleridge has told me that he himself liked to compose in walking over uneven ground, or breaking through the straggling branches of a copse-wood; whereas Wordsworth always wrote (if he could) walking up and down a straight







gravel-path, or in some spot where the continuity of his verse met with no collateral interruption." It is this temperamental, uncalculated proclivity to a personal form—undiverted as yet by organized pressures from outside—that makes tradition in art more meaningful to Smith than authoritative histories of stylistic derivation ever could.

On this score artists of various periods may share, in their various ways, attitudes which have been overlooked in formal histories. Such attitudes are personal, but not necessarily private. Few creative men have felt that their will alone has enabled them to act as artists; yet surely many artists have believed, at least in their inner counsel, that lines laid in vision at the beginning of a form would be truer in the outcome if they were not bent or twisted on the way by a commission for local public performance. Smith's view is far from a bootstrap enterprise.

Until recently the public was obstinate in awarding respect to personal vision in its own time, and historians still gloss over the evidence of personal creative attitudes in the past which would acknowledge their due place in tradition. But at last, having learned that the work of art which has survived in eventual public esteem is rarely the work which submitted to contemporary compromise, we seem to be taking a longer look at what is happening now. Formerly, a personal revelation was countenanced only after the society of the day was served by the same form in other ways, but now we appear to have passed into a period when society at least tolerates the possibility that it would be served better by an art that comes of personal vision. In company with others, Smith has put an overdue premium on the personal artistic venture which many artists of the past valued but could not stress in the representational form they served.

In short, assuming that collective values may be informed by individual insights of living men, we enjoy a break with public tradition, while Smith and other artists personally affirm the continuity of a creative spirit which the public had neglected.







In this sense Smith is a traditional artist, though unlike his predecessors he neither celebrates nor flaunts the trappings of public tradition. He has none of the arrogant qualifications which endear the star performer to a public obliged with an expected role. His brush is never flourished as a guardsman's mustache is twirled. There are no spectators or candid photographers in Smith's studio, his paintings never catch the moment before a reigning beauty fades, his social life is not a set for self-promotion. He paints with that assurance which comes of being humble, not to social values, but to a spirit which knows no masterpiece.

His paintings are, in effect, crises in a continuity of form. The crisis, not the form, is framed. No canvas of his could be hoped to contain more. Like a pool from under the crack of a door, color moves in from an edge or corner of the field on which he works. It is taken over, scuffed, blocked, attenuated, drummed against or smoothed into oblivion, for the rhythms Smith finds within himself are closer to those of Coleridge than Wordsworth. To glimpse what Smith is about, more than one painting is needed.

Once in a while he seems to stand back alarmed or aghast at what has happened just moments before, then to plunge in as if to cancel the movement with a calligraphic loop of the brush. Moved with passion, the initial passages are contradicted with equal fervor, for no man's course is even until feeling has cooled.

Henry Cowell once wrote an *Anger Dance*, inspired by his resentful crutch-march home after a doctor had told him his leg would have to be cut off. Cowell's and recollection takes over.

leg was not amputated, and the stump rhythms which commemorate those bitter moments did not reappear in his music. It was a mood piece, transient as a blush. Like Coleridge's, on the other hand, Smith's copse-wood rhythms are not only personal, they are deeply evocative and lasting. Unlike Wordsworth's, they do not abide the straight path.

Douglas MacAgy  
*Director, Dallas Museum for Contemporary Art*







*Biographical Notes*

Born 1915—Sturgis, Michigan

High school—San Mateo, California

College—Northwestern University 1936

California School of Fine Arts, San Francisco, 1936-38

Abraham Rosenberg Fellowship for independent study, 1941-42

Taught painting at California School of Fine Arts, 1945-52

(part of post-war group with Douglas MacAgy,

Mark Rothko and Clyfford Still)

Moved to Sebastopol, California in 1955

where he lives in an apple orchard and paints

Married and has two sons

*One-man shows:*

California Palace of the Legion of Honor, San Francisco, 1947, 1953

Ferus Gallery, Los Angeles, 1956, 1959

East-West Gallery, San Francisco, 1953

California School of Fine Arts Gallery, 1959

Dilexi Gallery, San Francisco, California, 1958

The New Arts, Houston, 1958, 1959

Gimpel Fils, London, 1960

*Public collections:*

Albright Art Gallery, Buffalo, New York

The Tate Gallery, London, England

Whitney Museum of American Art, New York

San Francisco Museum of Art





H. 1960

1960

Psychosocialism



ONE-MAN

HASSEL SMITH

LIBRARY

JUL 19 1974

LOS ANGELES COUNTY  
MUSEUM OF ART



*a select group of paintings, 1957-1961*

**Nov. 27 - Jan. 8**

*(Gallery closed Dec. 25 thru Jan. 3)*

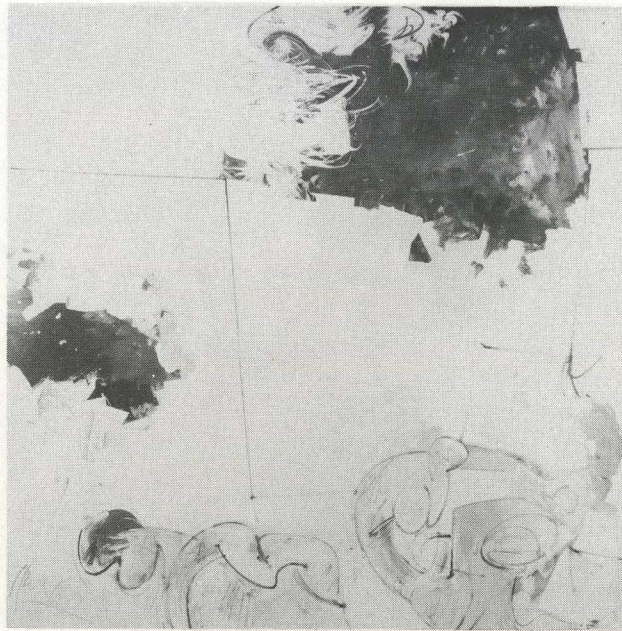
■ **Dilexi Gallery · 631 Clay Street · San Francisco**





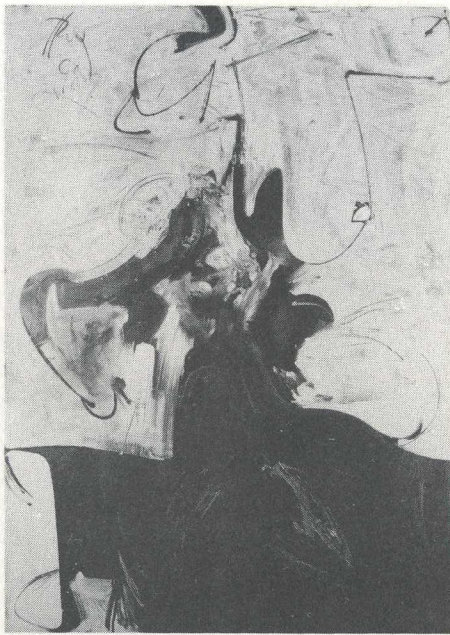
**Untitled, 1960, 48''x 68''**





**No. 5, 1960, 69½" x 68"**





*Omega 59 Minus One, 1959, 68''x 47½''*

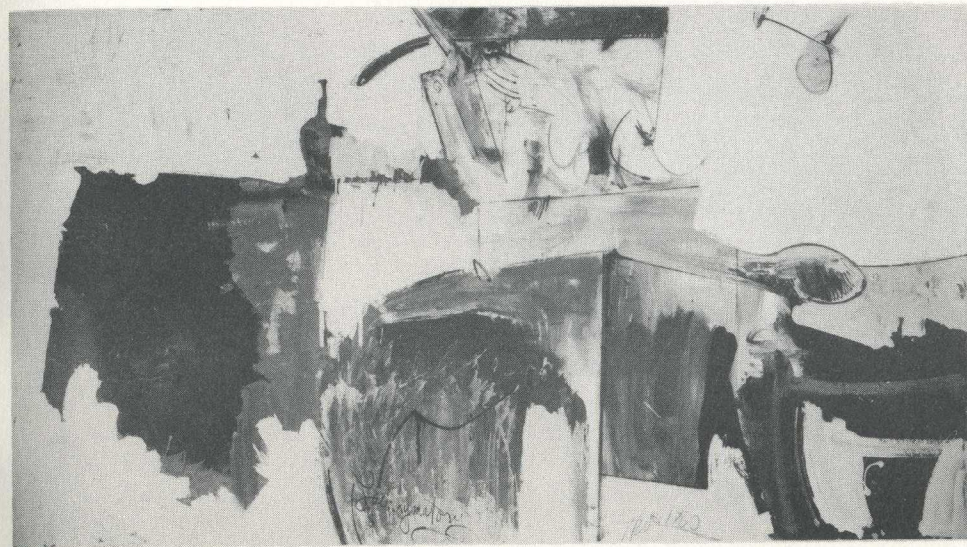


September, 1961, 70''x 49''





*Lachrymatory, 1960, 68''x 120''*

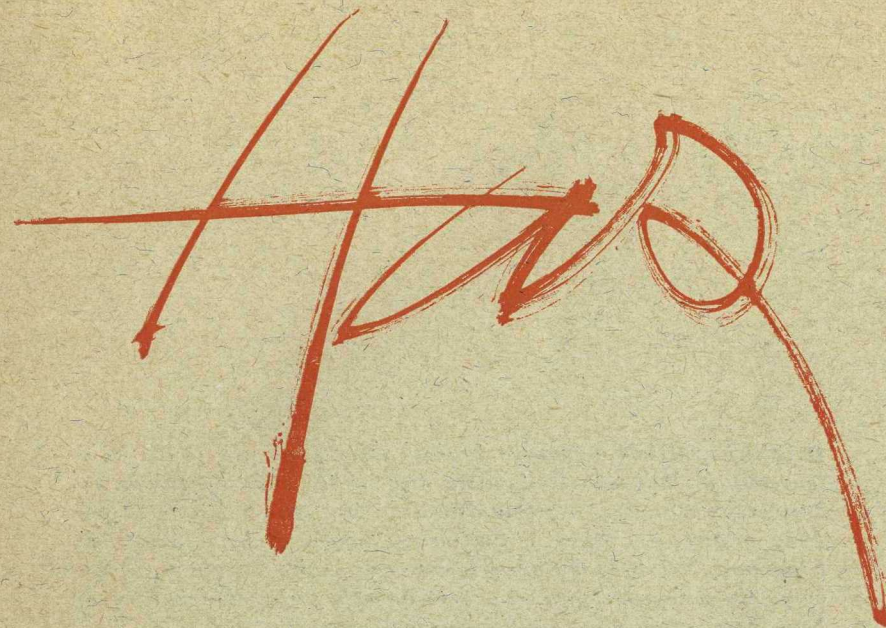




LA GALLERIA E' APERTA  
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ANCHE DALLE 21 ALLE 24  
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DNE-MAN

SMITH, H  
MAR 1 1963



LIBRARY  
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LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA

La Mostra si inaugura Giovedì 22 Novembre 1962 alle ore 18

GALLERIA DELL'ARIETE  
VIA S. ANDREA, 5 - MILANO



*HASSEL SMITH è nato a Sturgis, Michigan nel 1915. Si è laureato in Scienze Biologiche nel 1936 alla Northwestern University e inoltre in Storia dell'Arte. Ha frequentato nel 1936-1937 e parte del 1938 la California School of Fine Arts, San Francisco. Nel 1941 ha vinto la borsa di studio Abraham Rosenberg. Ha insegnato pittura e disegno alla California School of Fine Arts, ed in altre Università degli Stati Uniti. Dal 1955 al 1960 ha vissuto a Sebastopol, California; dove ha una coltivazione di mele. Attualmente vive in Cornovaglia, Inghilterra. E' sposato ed ha un figlio.*

#### *MOSTRE PERSONALI*

- 1947-1953: *California Palace of the Legion of Honour, San Francisco.*
- 1953: *East-West Gallery, San Francisco.*
- 1956-1959: *Ferus Gallery, Los Angeles.*
- 1958: *San Francisco.*
- 1959: *Reed Gallery, Portland, Oregon.*
- 1959-1960: *New Arts Gallery, Houston, Texas.*
- 1960-1962: *André Emmerich Gallery, New York.*
- 1961: *Pasadena Arts Museum.*
- 1962: *Gimpel Fils Gallery, Londra.*

Hassel Smith non lavora nella prima città che viene in mente quando si parla di pittura americana, ma nella seconda. Sebbene nato nel Middle West egli ha lavorato a lungo nel clima di San Francisco. Insegnava alla Scuola di Belle Arti di California nel periodo in cui vi si trovava Clifford Steel (ed i quadri più vecchi in questa mostra ricordano i piani piatti e le linee sbandate di Steel, benchè la tecnica di Smith sia più nebbiosa). San Francisco era importante per gli artisti alla fine degli anni '40, e Smith riportandosi a quei giorni, ha sottolineato le caratteristiche comuni dello stile di San Francisco. Queste comprendono « semplicità o mancanza di arte », umorismo, l'influenza del jazz, e « un simbolico uso del colore, come nelle carte geografiche, nelle bandiere e in araldica ». Questa può non essere una spiegazione completa della pittura di San Francisco, ma è abbastanza efficace se riferita all'arte di Smith che qui vediamo per la prima volta.

Ciò che Smith intende per « semplicità », risulta chiaro dalla sua pittura che è caratterizzata dalla ruvidezza e dall'immediatezza del tocco, esultante, ma sempre trattenta da ogni virtuosismo. Vi si sente il « momentum » dell'atto creativo come qualcosa di sconvolgente che travolge l'artista e con lui il suo lavoro. Questo senso di immediatezza è congiunto ad una sfida alle consuetudini pittoriche (mancanza di arte). Egli costantemente contrasta e sovverte le attese che egli stesso ha suscitato. Per esempio piani di colore tiratissimi sono bruscamente tagliuzzati e strappati, in modo che un mutamento di superficie o un rilievo appare improvvisamente nella pittura. Qualcosa di simile accade al suo disegno: ha una linea sinuosa, ma decisa che sembra nelle sue curve,



gonfiarsi come un seno o con i suoi zig-zag costruire un interno. Ma Smith oppone a questi effetti scontati dei piani di colore appiattiti come quando il colore sovrapposto appiattisce forme tondeggianti entro contorni precisi. O in un quadro come « Bird-lover » egli contrasta nodosi blocchi di forme con una fitta superficie di colore piatto in modo che la forma del dipinto risulti dall'opposizione di zone modellate e piatte.

Proprio come i volumi cominciano ad emergere solo per appiattirsi così le immagini di Smith sembrano sul punto di emergere come un progetto (variazione su di un tema guerresco o in *Verso Austerlitz*) e poi di colpo cade in una promessa: una promessa che non si è ben sicuri che egli abbia mai mantenuta. La sua pittura è come un luogo che sia il punto d'incontro di diverse regioni: improvvisazione, violenza, umorismo, tutto contribuisce alla sua pittura. La chiave del suo umorismo è data dai suoi stessi titoli, come quello del quadro da lui battezzato « La torta al formaggio futurista d'America ». Tale umorismo è di una specie che può essere forse rilevata da un aforismo: ci sono delle persone che pensano che la pittura sia un lavoro che insudicia. « Ma preferisco avere sulle mie mani pittura piuttosto che sangue ». Il doppio senso è pressapoco questo: Smith allude alla catartica teoria dell'arte e nello stesso tempo afferma che preferirebbe essere un pittore che un uomo politico o un soldato con le mani insanguinate o di avere sangue anche solo sul suo dito mignolo. L'umorismo di Smith così aspro e, come diciamo in Europa, Ubu-esco, può ricollegarsi ai suoi gusti in fatto di jazz.

Due delle fonti di ispirazione che egli cita sono Clay Spohn, il pittore che « portò il surrealismo e il dadai-

smo a San Francisco » e Lou Watters. Watters, con la sua orchestra di jazz Yerba Buena, capeggiò la rinascita del jazz tradizionale negli anni '40 (!). L'energia e la fiducia di Watters, attrassero Smith.

La riscoperta da parte di Watters dello stile originale di New Orleans era un ritorno a tutto ciò che era basilare e più antico nel jazz (di qui il nome della sua banda che significa « Buona terra »). Il gusto di Smith per la semplicità e la assenza di artificio in pittura ha lo stesso slancio verso le cose essenziali, rifuggente dall'elaborazione, dalla raffinatezza e dal virtuosismo.

Quando Smith lavora, ne vien fuori una struttura pittorica che non è soltanto colore; vi è sempre un forte senso di vita descritta, evocata. Il *Trionfo dei Mostri* non è soltanto uno spazio fatto di arancio e di rosso; la calligrafia che vi si scorge, alle volte seguendo alle volte sdegnando il colore araldico, aggancia e svela delle anatomiche. Come nel dipinto « Senza titolo 1959 » la struttura tesa e imprevedibile rigurgita di forme umane. Nell'aprirsi e nel chiudersi, la superficie svela delle forme che possono essere delle ninfee e delle groppe per tradurre in parola una delle tante possibilità che le sue linee suggeriscono. Semplici nodi di forme, appesantite silhouettes, piani tesi, creano un movimento, un senso di cambiamento che sempre trasforma le forme di Smith in immagini. E' naturale, dato la rude appassionata maniera di Smith di avvicinarsi all'arte come al jazz, che egli si opponga all'idea comune alla critica che la pittura sia la soluzione dei problemi.

Gran parte dei problemi da risolvere sono come egli fa notare, « anteriori all'arte: prospettive, anatomia, composizione, l'integrazione di influenze culturali e scultu-



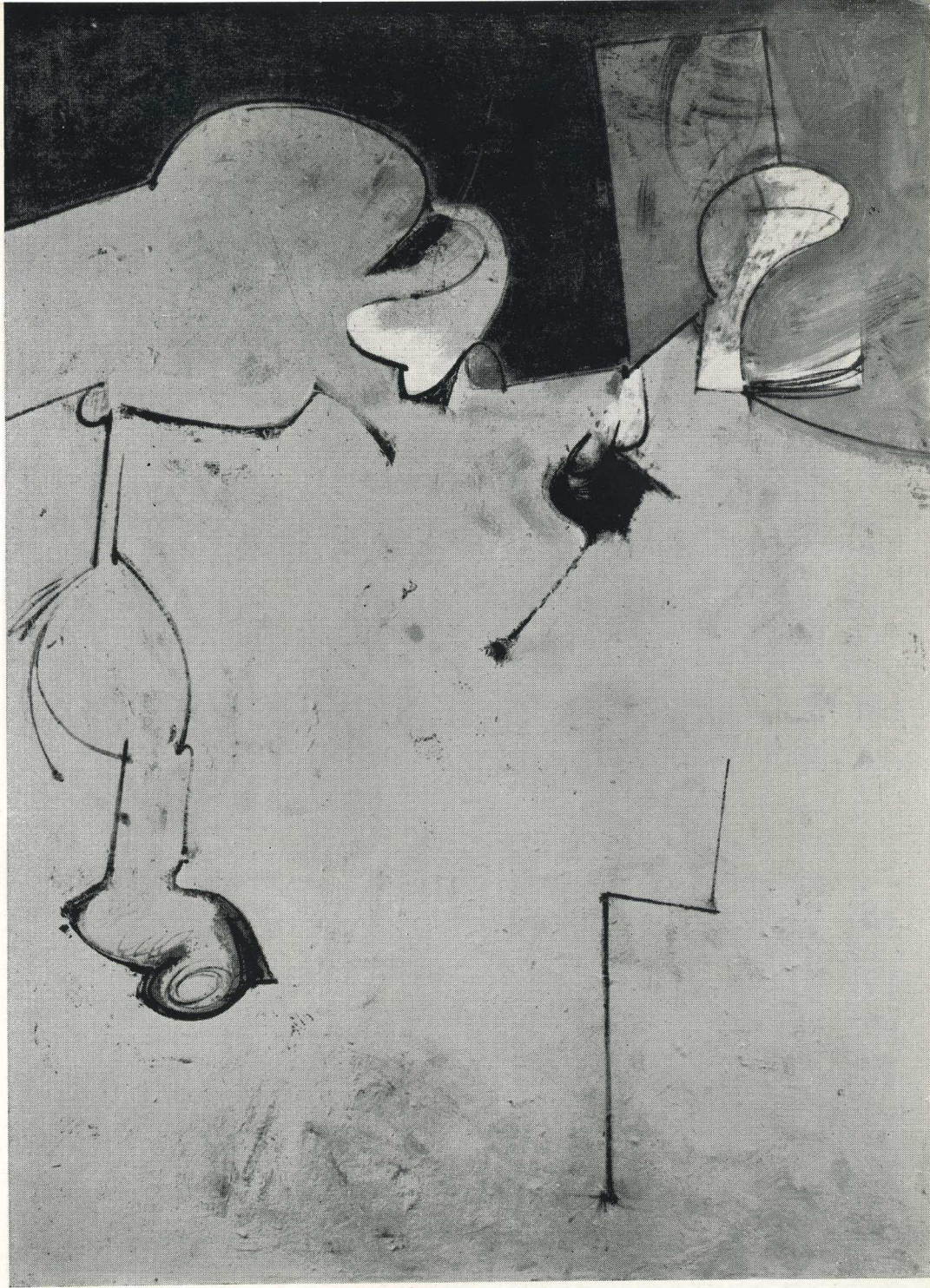
rali ». Smith si sottrae a questa immagine dell'artista come un topo prigioniero in un labirinto costruito dalla storia e dalla società con un'analogia tra l'atto creativo e un incidente d'auto. Questa analogia esprime assieme un senso di potere dello sviluppo pittorico e il mistero della sua fine ( : ). " Giusto nello stesso modo con il quale l'automobile investe l'uomo io posso testimoniare dei miei quadri come di *incidenti*. Io li vedo, ma non so perchè essi siano così. Essi sono avvenimenti cruciali nella mia vita, ma la loro causa, eccetto che nel senso più immediato chi può dire quale sia? " Smith paragona il pittore all'uomo nell'automobile: " egli ha urtato qualcheduno, ma non sa perchè. La causa di un avvenimento cruciale al quale egli ha attivamente partecipato, che egli stesso ha in un certo modo provocato, gli sfugge ".

LAWRENCE ALLOWAY

# Opere esposte:

1	<i>Senza titolo N. 1</i>	cm. 162 x 158	1958
2	<i>Senza titolo N. 2</i>	cm. 167 x 159	1959
3	<i>Senza titolo giallo</i>	cm. 170 x 158	1960
4	<i>Senza titolo N. 27</i>	cm. 53 x 112	1961
5	<i>Senza titolo N. 21</i>	cm. 53 x 112	1961
6	<i>Senza titolo N. 5</i>	cm. 173 x 175	1961
7	<i>Senza titolo N. 17</i>	cm. 170 x 124	1961
8	<i>Go to the bow wow dog house</i>	cm. 173 x 173	1962
9	<i>Ritmo del West</i>	cm. 175 x 102	1962
10	<i>Può questo essere amore?</i>	cm. 175 x 117	1962
11	<i>Qualche tipo di uccello</i>	cm. 172 x 172	1962
12	<i>Mendocino II</i>	cm. 173 x 170	1962
13	<i>On the eel 11</i>	cm. 178 x 175	1960-62
14	<i>Senza titolo, Tana del topo N. 1</i>	cm. 173 x 123	1962
15	<i>Il dio della foresta</i>	cm. 175 x 102	1962





HASSEL SMITH - "Senza titolo\_N. 2", - 1959 (cm. 178 x 127)



L.I.

DEC 2 1983

LOS ANGELES COUNTY  
MUSEUM OF ART

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**HASSEL SMITH**

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# **HASSEL SMITH**

## **paintings**

**April 1960**

**Gimpel Fils 50 South Molton Street London W1 · Mayfair 3720**





No.15 Rim Shot



## Biographical Notes

Born 1915, Sturgis, Michigan, U.S.A. High School—San Mateo, California; college—Northwestern University, Evanston, Illinois. B.Sc. 1936. Majored in Art History. Art School—California School of Fine Arts, San Francisco, 1936, 1937 and part of 1938. Awarded Abraham Rosenberg Fellowship for independent study, 1941. Taught Painting, Drawing, Litho and Design at the California School of Fine Arts 1945-47, and 1948-52; San Francisco State College 1946-47; Oregon University, Eugene, Oregon, 1947-48; Presidio Hill Elementary School 1952-55. Moved to Sebastopol, California, in 1955, where he has an apple orchard and paints. Married and has a son.

### *One-man shows:*

California Palace of the Legion of Honour, San Francisco, 1947, 1953  
Ferus Gallery, Los Angeles 1956, 1959  
East-West Gallery, San Francisco 1953  
San Francisco 1958  
New Arts Gallery, Houston, Texas 1959, 1960  
Reed Gallery, Portland, Oregon 1959

### *Invitation Exhibitions:*

'Pacemakers', Contemporary Arts Gallery, Houston, Texas 1958  
'Fresh Paint in '58', Santa Barbara Museum and travelling 1958-59  
'Winter Exhibition', California Palace of the Legion of Honour 1960  
Won first prize San Francisco municipal Open-air Art Show 1958





No.1 Untitled (San Francisco series)



## Hassel Smith

Hassel Smith works not in the first city you think of when American painting is mentioned but in the second. Though born in the mid-West he has long been associated with San Francisco. He taught at the California School of Fine Arts during the time that Clyfford Still was there (and the earliest painting in this exhibition recalls Still's flat planes and straggling lines, though Smith's treatment is mistier). San Francisco was a great place for artists in the late 1940s and Smith, looking back at those days, has suggested the common characteristics of a San Francisco style. These include 'simplicity, or lack of art', humour, the influence of jazz, and 'a symbolic use of colour, as in maps, flags, and heraldry'. This may not be a comprehensive account of all San Francisco painting but it is a good way in to Smith's own art, here seen in England for the first time.

What Smith means by 'simplicity' is evident from his painting, which is characterised by roughness and immediacy of handling, exultant but always held back from virtuosity. One feels the momentum of the creative act as something which is rolling downhill, taking the artist and the work with it. This feeling of immediacy is linked to a defiance of painting habits ('lack of art'). He constantly opposes and subverts expectations that he has himself raised. For example, drum-taut planes of colour are abruptly shredded or torn, so that a surface-change or a warp suddenly happens in the picture. Something similar happens to his drawing:



he has a supple but driving line which seems, in its curves, about to swell like breasts or, in its zig-zags, to build an interior. But Smith opposes such expected effects by flat planes of paint, as when overlapping colour flattens rounded forms to lean edges. Or in a picture like *Bird Lover* he contrasts knobbly blocks of form with a thick plane of flat colour, so that the form of the picture rises from the opposition of modelled and flat areas.

Just as volumes start to emerge only to be snapped flat, so Smith's imagery seems to be on the point of emerging as a programme (Variations on a war-like theme, or *On To Austerlitz*, for example, no.6; *see illustration*) and then suddenly collapses to a promise, one you cannot be sure has been kept. His painting is like a spot where several counties meet: improvisation, violence, and humour all contribute to his painting. Clues to the humour are in Smith's titles, such as the brilliant painting called *Futuristic Cheesecake of America*. The humour is of a kind that is, perhaps, revealed by an aphorism of Smith's: 'Some people think painting a messy business. But I would rather have paint than blood on my hands'. The double meaning is something like this: Smith is alluding to the cathartic theory of art and, at the same time, affirming that he would rather be a painter than a politician or a soldier, with blood on his hands or blood on his button finger. Smith's humour, rugged and, as we say in Europe, *Ubu-esque*, possibly links with Smith's taste in jazz.

Two of the models of influence that Smith mentions are Clay Spohn, the painter, who 'brought surrealism and dada to



San Francisco' and Lou Watters. Watters, with his Yerba Buena jazz band, led the revival of traditional jazz in the 40s. Watters' energy and confidence, growing out of the conditions of performance, appealed to Smith. Watters' recovery of the original New Orleans style was a return to what was basic and early in jazz (hence the name of the band which means 'Good Earth'). Smith's taste for simplicity and lack of art in painting has a corresponding drive for essentials, scornful of elaboration, refinement, and topicality. (Rim Shot, no.15 [*see illustration*] in this exhibition, is a term from jazz, incidentally, used when a drummer hits the head and the rim of the drum at the same time.)

As Smith works a pictorial structure emerges which one never reads as the track of paint; there is always a strong sense of depicted, evoked life. The Triumph of Gargoylism is not a space made of orange and red only; the calligraphy, as it goes over the surface, sometimes following, sometimes denying the heraldic colour, hooks anatomies into view. As in Futuristic Cheesecake of America and Untitled 1959 (no.14; *see illustration*) the tense and unpredicted structure seethes with the human presence. As the surface opens and shuts forms appear that are somewhere between water-lilies and hips—to try and verbalise one of the many possibilities his line makes. Linear knots of form, heaving silhouettes, taut planes, create a motion and sense of change, which always turns Smith's shapes into images.

It is natural, given Smith's tough and passionate approach to art, as to jazz, that he opposes the idea, common in art criticism,



that painting is the solution of problems. Most of the problems to be solved are, as he points out, 'anterior to art: for example, perspective, anatomy, composition, the integration of cultural or sculptural influences'. Smith escapes from this image of the artist as a rat in a maze built by history and society by an analogy between the creative act and a car accident. This analogy expresses both a sense of the power of a developing painting and the mysteriousness of its end. 'In just the same sense as the car hit the man I can bear witness to my paintings as "accidents". I see them but I do not know why they look as they do. They are *crucial events* in my life but the cause of them, except in an immediate sense—who can tell what it is?' Smith compares the painter to the man in the car: 'he has hit someone and he doesn't know why. The cause of a crucial event in which he actively *participated*, of which he was in a sense the cause, escapes him'.

#### LAWRENCE ALLOWAY

Lawrence Alloway wishes to thank Roger Coleman for supplying the information about San Francisco jazz.

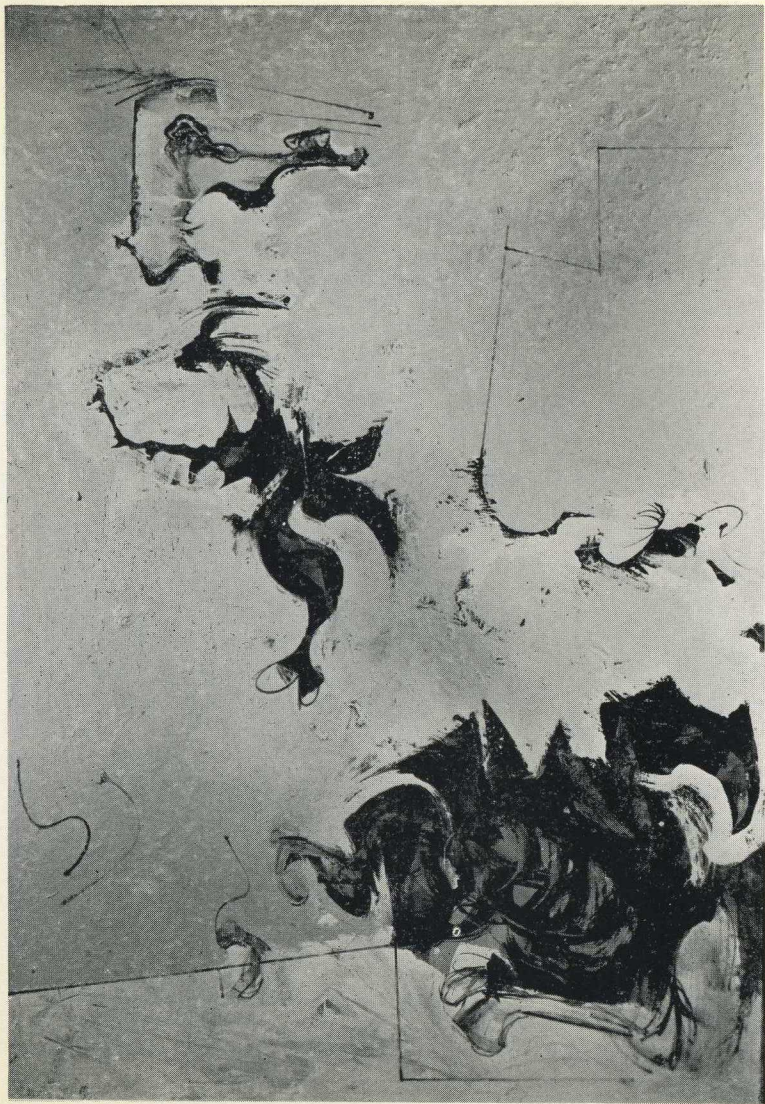
Quotations from Hassel Smith from *The Artist's View*, no 1, 1952;  
Sulla scuola di San Francisco by Hassel Smith, in *Evento*, no 2, 1958.





No.5 The triumph of gargoylism





No.14 Untitled



## Catalogue

1	Untitled (San Francisco series)	oil on canvas	1950	68" × 68"
2	Untitled	oil on canvas	1953	33" × 33"
3	Untitled	oil on canvas	1955	60" × 50"
4	Bird lover	oil on canvas	1957	58" × 98"
5	The triumph of gargoylism	oil on canvas	1957	68 $\frac{3}{4}$ " × 67"
6	Variations on war-like theme or On to Austerlitz	oil on canvas	1957	50" × 69 $\frac{1}{2}$ "
7	Futuristic cheesecake of America	oil on canvas	1957	70" × 49 $\frac{1}{2}$ "
8	Untitled	oil on canvas	1958	49 $\frac{1}{2}$ " × 41"
9	Untitled	oil on canvas	1959	46 $\frac{1}{2}$ " × 24"
10	Untitled	oil on canvas	1959	46 $\frac{1}{2}$ " × 24"
11	Untitled	oil on canvas	1959	46 $\frac{1}{2}$ " × 24"
12	Untitled	oil on canvas	1959	46 $\frac{1}{2}$ " × 24"
13	Untitled	oil on canvas	1959	70" × 50 $\frac{1}{2}$ "
14	Untitled	oil on canvas	1959	71" × 49"
15	Rim shot	oil on canvas	1959	70" × 65 $\frac{1}{2}$ "





No.6 Variations on war-like theme or On to Austerlitz

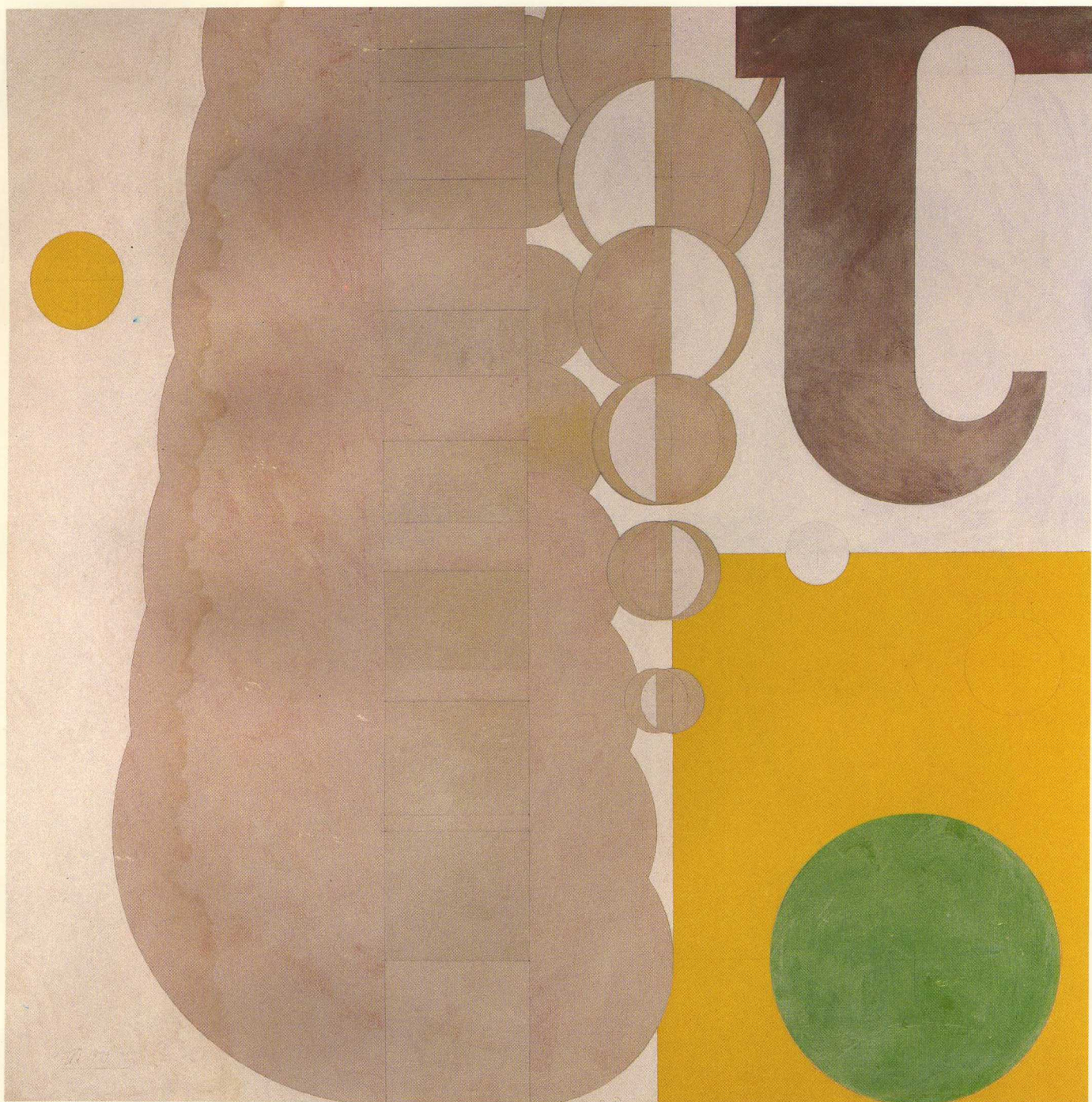


next exhibition **SANDRA BLOW**

**GIMPEL FILS**

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**HASSEL SMITH**

*Selected Works 1945-1981*

**THE OAKLAND MUSEUM**



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1000 Oak Street, Oakland CA 94607

design: Gordon Chun

cover:

**About 9**, 1979, acrylic on canvas, 68 x 68, gift of Agnes Cowles Bourne.





# HASSEL SMITH

**PREFACE** *Terry St John*  
**TEXT** *Hassel Smith*

The Oakland Museum  
Art Special Gallery  
March 3-April 26, 1981



**LENDERS**

**Gallery Paule Anglim, *San Francisco***

**Buck and Agnes Bourne, *Piedmont***

**Mr. and Mrs. Robert Lauter, *San Francisco***

**Henri Lenoir, *San Francisco***

**Joseph Smith, *San Francisco***

**Mr. and Mrs. Lewis Smith, *Mill Valley***

**University Art Museum, *Berkeley***



## PREFACE

Hassel Smith is one of the most influential artists to have come out of the San Francisco Bay Area since World War II. His exhibitions and art activities have been written about, discussed and viewed with great intensity in this area for over thirty years. Although he has resided in England since 1962, he has continued to visit here in connection with periodic teaching stints at the San Francisco Art Institute and the University of California at Berkeley.

During his career he has exhibited his work at major art centers in the United States, Europe and England. It is apparent, however, that much of his art activities still seem to be centered in the San Francisco Bay Area. In 1975 he had a retrospective exhibition at the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art. In addition, he has had annual one-man shows at the Gallery Paule Anglim and has participated in important group exhibitions in this region in recent years.

The Oakland Museum has forty-eight works by Hassel Smith in its permanent collection: forty-two paintings, one drawing, three collages, and two lithographs. Thirty-five of these pieces were given to The Oakland Museum by the artist. This show has been organized, in part, to honor this magnificent bequest. It should be emphasized that this exhibition is not a retrospective survey . . . it does offer fine examples from various important periods of his art career ranging from his mid-40's figurative expressionist paintings to the more recent purified geometric canvases. The emphasis of this exhibition is on the paintings done since 1975 — paintings that many art observers deem to be among the finest canvases of his long career.

On behalf of The Oakland Museum I would like to acknowledge Hassel Smith's cooperation in connection with the organization of this exhibition and to express our gratitude for the excellent works that he so generously donated to us.

I especially want to thank Paule Anglim of Gallery Paule Anglim for her invaluable contributions to this project. I would also like to express my appreciation to the lenders of Hassel's work.

**Terry St. John**  
Associate Curator



*Art has arrived at the paradox that tradition itself requires the occurrence of radical attacks on tradition . . . .*

*. . . . vanguardism continues to be bravely upheld by custodians of tradition — art historians, curators, critics and editors . . . .*

*. . . . an advance in art is considered to take place to the degree that art divests itself of the characteristics of art. Whatever mode comes closest to a score of zero for the art object is assigned the foreground position.*

**Harold Rosenberg**

Excerpted from **New Yorker** February 24 1973.



**REDUCTIONISM** in art (Purism, Minimalism, etc.) tends to present itself as a moral imperative. "Less is more"; 1 mark is "better" than 2 marks. "PURE ART" is apparently impure art from which the "impurities" have been removed. To argue with this implies being "against" "purity," a difficult position to take just as, conversely, one can hardly avoid being "against" "sin." Accepting the purist and/or minimalist point of view seems to require one to conclude that the most pure or most virtuous state of the painting is the untouched canvas, square, round, triangular or whatever and the contemplation of these essential forms becomes the ultimate in aesthetic experience.

But this is a mystical proposition which excludes appreciative judgment and therefore all art.

Eliminating the moral imperative we immediately see that in art as in life variable degrees of eventfulness (1 mark to an infinity of marks) is a condition of **BEING** about which no prescriptive judgment needs to, cannot in fact, be made. Thus we expect to be "busy" (a higher degree of eventfulness) on occasion while under other circumstances a relative absence of "event" denotes a "quiet life." Both states are appreciated as necessary and desirable and do in fact complement one another.

In auditory terms **SILENCE** is discernible only in relation to **NOISE**, the reverse being equally true. The two states are functions of one another. The corners of a canvas are events with a necessary dimensional "interval" between them but that does not imply that the interval is without "eventfulness," is in other words, "nothing."

No necessary virtue attaches itself to 1 mark (or event) as against 2 or 500 unless these events are made in some way to refer to specifically "human" circumstances such as we might expect in History, Religious or Pre-Raphaelite painting. If the event depicted is murder, arson or rape, we are expected presumably to make some moral, that is emotive or prescriptive judgment. . . . bad in these cases, good if other sorts of events are alluded to: Bringing in the harvest; dog saving little girl from the surf; cardinal asleep with a fly on the end of his nose and so on. But about squares, triangles and circles it is simply meaningless to say that one is better than the other. One square cannot be "better" than another square if both are to remain squares. I may "prefer" circles to squares but that is an altogether different matter than affirming one "better" than the other.

Appreciative judgment can only be applied to the "context" of their relationship, composed as it must be, of variable degrees of eventfulness, functions of one another, by definition.

HWS 1980

**REDUCTIONISM:** *It is the task of every scientist to find the simplest, most economical and (usually) most elegant explanation that covers the known data. Beyond this, reductionism becomes a vice if it is accompanied by an overly strong insistence that the simplest explanation is the only explanation.*

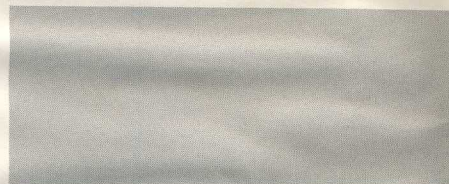
Gregory Bateson  
*Mind and Nature*



*"We used chance operations, seeing that they were useful only where there is a definite limitation on the number of possibilities."*

**John Cage**

(Referring to his work with the Cunningham Dance Company).





My paintings present in 2 dimensional color and shape a stochastic system whereby a process of selection has been combined with a set of partially random events, both digital and analogic, toward a preferred outcome so that only certain outcomes of the random are allowed to endure. "Random" in this context implies a multiplicity of event so great as to defy rationalization by an ordinary or unaided mental process. "Context" implies that some restraint exists or has been applied to the area of possibility.

Stress develops with a lack of flexibility as the available un-committed alternatives are used up and can be relieved by referring back to the original matrix of co-ordinates.

The process is tautological in the sense that the links between the preferred events are or seem to be indisputable though the truth (or necessity) of the events themselves is not claimed. A topology occurs where shape is unaffected by quantitative change.

HWS 1980

*The "scientific mind" has been closely bound up with the avant-garde for much of the Modern Era, perhaps more than has been healthy. Perhaps the end of this alliance and a return to "the personality" is what is meant by "post Modernism."*

From a Bay Area Newspaper, August 30, 1979

The "scientific mind" (rational??) has been if anything LESS 'closely bound up with the avant-garde' than the "unscientific mind" (irrational??). Distinctions of this sort suggest a lack of comprehension of what Bateson would call "an ecology of mind." Those who continue to think in terms of dualisms and dichotomies will interpret my description of my paintings as a confirmation of their "views."

HWS 1980



**"Quantity does not determine pattern"**

A statement frequently made by Gregory Bateson (*Mind & Nature, Steps to an Ecology of Mind*, etc.) about which the experience of making my recent paintings has caused me to have some doubt as to whether it applies in EVERY instance.

**PATTERN:**

Pattern is or seems to be an arrangement of parts of any number not less (probably) than 8 whereby some **DIFFERENCE** (other than quantity?) can be perceived to occur between one part and at least one other part, this difference to REoccur with sufficient frequency and regularity to imply the probable continuation of this order of events and intervals beyond the immediate FRAME of TIME and/or **EXTENT** in which these are initially perceived. Thus pattern implies a **PREDICTABLE PROBABILITY** and must be subject to some **RESTRAINT** as to interfere with the UNrestrained operation of the laws of chance.

We cannot predict whether a tossed coin will come up heads or tails; we do know that it will be **EITHER** heads OR tails. Imagine a situation in which I have a number of sheets of white paper of variable size. If I regularly place over any sheet another larger than the preceding one I will have ordered them in relation to size, i.e. quantity (in the sense of area) but I will not have determined a perceivable pattern (except in my **RECOLLECTION** of the process) since each sheet will have obliterated the previous one from the standpoint of **VISUAL** perception. In other words I will not have **COMMUNICATED** the **INFORMATION** of pattern since only one sheet will remain visible. If however I now separate the sheets, placing them side by side either laterally or vertically with some **INTERVAL** between them but in an ascending/descending order of area will I not have created a pattern determined by quantity since the only perceivable difference between them (all being white) is area, a quantitative distinction? **NO**. Having separated the sheets a concept of a higher order of logical typing comes into operation, i.e. **FRAME**, this being a digital rather than an analogic/quantitative difference and the controlling factor in this pattern. But suppose I blow a single note on a horn, gradually increasing the intensity, i.e. quantity, of sound, then decreasing, then increasing and so on and do this sufficiently often (8 times or more). Is this not a discernible, i.e. audible, pattern determined by quantity? Or must we propose the situation of a **NUMBER** of instrumentalists all playing the same note on the same instrument, some playing softly alternating with those playing more loudly to approach a true definition of quantity in sound.\* If this be so then of course the concept of frame (a number of different players) once again enters the situation as a (or THE) determining factor of pattern.



But a continuum of sound is a **DISCURSIVE** phenomenon. The pieces of paper laid out side by side could be seen in their relation to one another "at a glance" so were a **PRESENTATIONAL** experience. Therefore in relation to sound (music, noise) the question of **RECOLLECTION** or **MEMORY** comes into the case in a way not so evident or not at all evident in visual perception (disregarding for the moment "after image," "set" theory etc.) Thus any **PATTERN** of sound **HOWEVER DETERMINED** occurs in **TIME** and is perceivable only to those players, listeners or other means of awareness (recording equipment for example) present at the **BEGINNING** of the process and continuing to be so through a certain number (8?) of repetitions of the sequence. But the pattern will certainly be discernible to them or "it" **HOWEVER DETERMINED**.

I don't know enough about sound technology to make a judgment but perhaps we must appeal to **SOME** sophisticated technology in order to clarify the situation. Is sound, "waves" or "particles" or "waves of particles"? Color that is "colors," pigments are certainly particles but crucial to the argument is the **MANNER** and/or **TIME CONTEXT** of our perception of them as vehicles of pattern. Pigments have tactility but we "see" only the light reflected from them.

However these questions are resolved I distinctly recognize the primacy of **QUANTITY** (more or less blue, red, green and so on) as a (THE?) vehicle of rhythmic expression in my painting. \*When I recently put this question to Steve Reich his initial reaction (not extended in further discussion unfortunately) was to interpret quantity in sound in this way.

HWS 1980

Hassel:

I think I've got at least part of the answer:  
Pattern is discontinuous — i.e. made up of discrete units (i.e. number etc.).  
Quantity is continuous — therefore cannot "determine" pattern . . . except possibly as he says (Bateson) as a "ratio between units" . . . this would be the case in the waves of sound example you used last night.

B. Scales  
June 1980



"... but I would rather be free in a leafless tree than a bird in a gilded cage."

I paint. I also teach painting. A few years ago it occurred to me that the painting I did was not the same as the painting I taught.

"Practice what you preach," I thought. Not that I consider it either necessary or desirable to teach students to paint as I paint, but I felt that a reasonable degree of congruity ought to exist between my personal approach to painting and what I say to students about it. The paintings in this exhibition, and others like them from about 1973, represent my efforts to resolve this contradiction and specifically to resolve it in favor of the painting taught.

The paintings in this show are also related to a long-held conviction that painting, MY painting, could be closely related to the arts of music and dance as well as to forms not commonly considered to be ART: game boards, flags, maps, rugs, quilts, and so forth.

Some of these paintings either tend to be or are about games, rules of the game and the strategies required to win without cheating. ALL of the paintings are about building, being in or getting out of cages, whether gilded or not. About being in and getting out of a cage while leaving the cage intact — Houdini stuff! The images include painting oneself into the middle of a room, papering over doors and windows, sitting on a limb while sawing it off next to the trunk.

The question of SYSTEMS arises, their visual accessibility and recoverability from the finished work. Also involved are considerations like events and intervals, greater or lesser degrees of discursiveness, patterns and predictability.

MANY years ago I had this thought: The blank canvas is in its most ordered state. In a state, metaphorically speaking, of CHAOS. The word is used in its original mythical and only necessary meaning, the time before TIME, the place before PLACE, the ABSOLUTE, the UNIMAGINABLE. Once one understands this, one also understands that with "White Square on White" Malevich brought painting to the edge of the abyss. Away from the precipice, "order" is an entirely relative concept. ART viewed as making "order" out of "chaos" is nonsense.

Hassel Smith  
January 1977

The above statement appeared in relation to an exhibition of my paintings at Gallery Paule Anglim in San Francisco. It was seized upon by certain art journalists as an unheard of admission of academic practice and prejudice. Thus was reflected their uninformed and weak-minded opinion that ART cannot be taught and any artist who teaches (as most do) is ipso facto that bad word, an "academic."



*"However, soon collectors and dealers began to come to the studio asking for the earlier works, looking carefully at the dates and flattering me with the word PIONEER. One would think they were interested in what was considered the best vintage years of wines. Although this annoyed me, I willingly gave up the older things until there were almost none left and looked forward with pleasure to when I could say there were no more. Perhaps then they would pay some attention to the later works; or would I have to wait for the next generation?"*

**SELF PORTRAIT**  
by Man Ray.

My own experience exactly!

HWS August 1980

*No artist can assure his success any more than he can control the public's reception of his vision. But this is not the same as saying that it is all just matter of luck. An artist today cannot leave his entire career to chance, because he will find others are attending to theirs and he will be 'closed out' as a result.*

Excerpted from  
"Should the Artist  
Become a Man of the World"  
by Allan Kaprow.



... but I want also to dismiss a more dangerous heresy, namely the silly idea that only art matters, an idea which has somehow got mixed up with the idea of art for art's sake, and has helped to discredit it. **Many things besides art, matter. It is merely one of the things that matter,** and high though the claims are that I make for it, I want to keep them in proportion. No one can spend his or her life entirely in the creation or the appreciation of masterpieces. Man lives, and ought to live, in a complex world, full of conflicting claims, and if we simplified them down into the aesthetic he would be sterilized. Art for art's sake does not mean that only art matters, and I would like to rule out such phrases as 'The Life of Art,' 'Living for Art,' 'Art's High Mission.' They confuse and mislead.

Excerpt from  
*Two Cheers for Democracy*  
E. M. Forster.



# Hassel Smith

## SELECTED CHRONOLOGY

- 1915** Born April 27 in Sturgis, Michigan
- STUDIED:**
- 1936** B.S. in Art History, Northwestern University, Chicago
- 1936-38** California School of Fine Arts, San Francisco
- TAUGHT:**
- 1945-1952** California School of Fine Arts, San Francisco
- 1947-1948** University of Oregon, Eugene
- 1963** University of California, Berkeley (also 1965, 1977-78, 1979-80)
- 1965-66** University of California, Los Angeles
- 1966-1979** Bristol Polytechnic, England
- 1973** University of California, Davis (artist-in-residence)
- 1975** University of California, Davis
- ONE-MAN EXHIBITIONS**
- 1947** California Palace of the Legion of Honor, San Francisco (also, 1953)
- 1953** King Ubu Gallery, San Francisco; East and West Gallery, San Francisco (also, 1955)
- 1956** Ferus Gallery, Los Angeles (also, 1958, 1959, 1961, 1962)
- 1957** California School of Fine Arts, San Francisco
- 1958** The New Arts, Houston (also, 1961); Dilexi Gallery, San Francisco (also, 1957, 1958, 1959, 1960, 1961, 1962, 1964, 1965)
- 1960** Gimpel Fils, London (also, 1963)
- 1961** Pasadena Art Museum; André Emmerich Gallery, New York (also, 1962, 1963)
- 1962** Galleria Dell'Ariete, Milan; University Gallery, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis
- 1964** San Francisco State College; Worth Ryder Gallery, University of California, Berkeley; David Stuart Galleries, Los Angeles (also 1966, 1968, 1969, 1973)
- 1968** Santa Barbara Museum of Art, Santa Barbara, California
- 1972** Bristol Art Gallery, England
- 1973** Suzanne Saxe Gallery, San Francisco
- 1974** *Hassel Smith in Houston*, Sarah Campbell Blaffer Gallery, University of Houston, Texas
- 1975** San Francisco Museum of Art
- 1977** Gallery Paule Anglim (also, 1978, 1979, 1980)
- 1980** Tortue Gallery, Los Angeles
- GROUP EXHIBITIONS**
- 1941** *Paintings by Lloyd Wulf and Hassel Smith*, San Francisco Museum of Art
- 1945** *Contemporary American Painting*, California Palace of the Legion of Honor, San Francisco
- 1948** *Paintings by Elmer Bischoff, David Park and Hassel Smith*, San Francisco Museum of Art
- 1950** Two-Man Exhibition (with Richard Diebenkorn), Lucien Labaudt Gallery, San Francisco
- 1951** Two-Man Exhibition (with Edward Corbett), California School of Fine Arts, San Francisco



- 1954 *From San Francisco: A New Language in Painting*, Kaufmann Art Gallery, YM-YWHA, New York
- 1958 *Art: USA: 58*, Madison Square Garden, New York
- 1960 *A Look at Recent Bay Area Art*, San Francisco Museum of Art
- 1961 *The 1961 Pittsburgh International Exhibition of Contemporary American Painting*, The Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.
- 1962 *The Artist's Environment: West Coast*, The Amon Carter Museum of American Art, Fort Worth, organized in collaboration with the UCLA Art Galleries, University of California, Los Angeles, and the Oakland Art Museum, California, traveling exhibition; *Fifty California Artists*, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, San Francisco Museum of Art, Los Angeles County Museum of Art; *Some Points of View - '62*, Stanford University Art Gallery, Stanford, California
- 1963 *John Moores Liverpool Exhibition*, Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool, England
- 1964 *Selections from the L. M. Asher Family Collection*, The Art Gallery, University of New Mexico, Albuquerque
- 1965 *Selections from the Work of California Artists*, Witte Memorial Museum, San Antonio, Texas
- 1967 *American Art of the Sixties: Selections from the Collections of Mr. and Mrs. Robert A. Rowan*, San Francisco Museum of Art
- 1968 *On Looking Back: Bay Area 1956-1962*, San Francisco Museum of Art; *Late Fifties at the Ferus*, Los Angeles County Museum of Art
- 1969 *West Coast 1945-1969*, Pasadena Art Museum; *Kompas 4 West Coast, USA*, Stedelijk van Abbemuseum, Eindhoven, The Netherlands
- 1973 *A Period of Exploration, San Francisco 1945-1950*, The Oakland Museum
- 1976 *Painting and Sculpture in California: The Modern Era*, San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, 1976, National Collection of Fine Arts, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D. C., 1977; *American Painters Living in England*, a traveling exhibition sponsored by Winsor Newton & Co., Ltd.
- 1979 *Annual Drawing Invitational*, Central Washington State College, Ellensburg, Washington, curated by Elmer Bischoff; *Aspects of Abstract: Recent West Coast Abstract Painting and Sculpture*, E. B. Crocker Art Gallery, Sacramento
- 1980 *Gallery Paule Anglim*, San Francisco



## CATALOGUE LISTING

Measurements are in inches —  
height precedes width.  
All works lent by  
Gallery Paule Anglim,  
unless otherwise noted.

- 1 **In the Suburbs**, 1945, pencil on paper, 17 x 13¾, collection of The Oakland Museum, gift of Mrs. David Park (62.78.3).
- 2 **Girl with Mirror**, 1946, oil on canvas, 30 x 30, lent by Henri Lenoir.
- 3 **Queen for a Day**, 1946, oil on canvas, 42 x 45, collection of The Oakland Museum, gift of the artist (66.122.11).
- 4 **Profile, Head of Girl**, 1946, 14 x 10, oil on canvas board, lent by Joseph Smith.
- 5 **Columbia Landscape**, 1947, oil on canvas, 25½ x 23½, lent by Mr. and Mrs. Lewis Smith.
- 6 **Self Portrait**, 1948, oil on canvas, 16 x 12, collection of The Oakland Museum, gift of the Art Guild of the Oakland Museum Association (65.113).
- 7 **Untitled** (Non-Objective), 1951, oil on canvas, 38 x 30, collection of The Oakland Museum, gift of the Art Guild of the Oakland Museum Association (65.114).
- 8 **Brandenberg Barbecue**, 1952, oil on canvas, 61½ x 53⅞.
- 9 **Untitled #1**, c. 1955, collage, 30 x 40, collection of The Oakland Museum, gift of the artist (66.122.30).
- 10 **Untitled #2**, 1955, collage, 30 x 40, collection of The Oakland Museum, gift of the artist (66.122.31).
- 11 **B1960**, 1960, oil on canvas, 67½ x 69½, collection of The Oakland Museum, gift of the Art Guild of the Oakland Museum Association (65.116).
- 12 **MaMaRa**, 1961, oil on canvas, 68 x 48, lent by Mr. and Mrs. Robert Lauter.
- 13 **Untitled**, 1961, oil on canvas, 68 x 68, lent by Buck and Agnes Bourne.
- 14 **Untitled**, 1972, acrylic on canvas, 46 x 46, lent by Douglas Watson.
- 15 **Untitled**, 1974, acrylic on canvas, 48 x 48.
- 16 **Untitled**, 1975, acrylic on canvas, 72 x 72.
- 17 **1.2.3.4.1 Painting**, 1975-76, acrylic on canvas, 68 x 68.
- 18 **A.1.2.3.4.1 Painting**, 1975-76, acrylic on canvas, 68 x 68.
- 19 **From 1 to 9**, 1975-76, acrylic on canvas, 68 x 68.
- 20 **Cosmic Funk**, 1976, acrylic on canvas, 68 x 68.
- 21 **More and More Cosmic Funk**, 1976, acrylic on canvas, 68 x 68.
- 22 **Homage to the Headhunters**, 1977, acrylic on canvas, 68 x 68.
- 23 **Untitled**, 1977, construction (cardboard and wood), 68 x 68.
- 24 **The Military Two-Step**, 1977, construction (cardboard and wood), 48 x 68.



- 25 **Bop City**, 1978, acrylic on canvas, 68 x 68.
- 26 **Untitled**, 1978, acrylic on canvas, 68 x 40<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub>.
- 27 **King Clone**, 1978, acrylic on canvas, 68 x 68.
- 28 **The Portuguese Navigator or Twinkle Twinkle**, 1978, acrylic on canvas, 68 x 68.
- 29 **Not About 9**, 1979, acrylic on canvas, 68 x 68.
- 30 **About 9**, 1979, acrylic on canvas, 68 x 44.
- 31 **About 9**, 1979, acrylic on canvas, 68 x 68, gift of Agnes Cowles Bourne.
- 32 **More About 9**, 1980, acrylic on canvas, 68 x 68, lent by University Art Museum, Berkeley, purchase made with funds provided by Mrs. Phyllis Wattis.
- 33 **Untitled**, 1980, acrylic on canvas, 68 x 68.
- 34 **About #99**, 1980, acrylic on canvas, 68 x 68.



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